

# ***Hessville Neighborhood Plan***

***Hammond, Indiana***



*Prepared by Trkla, Pettigrew, Allen & Payne, Inc. • HNTB Corporation • July 2001*



## **HESSVILLE NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This report presents the *Hessville Neighborhood Plan* for the City of Hammond, Indiana. It presents recommendations for the maintenance and enhancement of existing areas, and for desirable improvements, developments and redevelopments in selected locations. This final Plan report summarizes the results of an approximately year-long planning program in Hammond, and incorporates much of the material included in previous interim reports and memoranda prepared during the course of the study.

### ***The Hessville Community***

The Hessville Neighborhood of Hammond is a mature community with a current population of approximately 20,500 persons. It is located in the southeastern section of the City and is generally bounded by the Grand Calumet River on the north, the Little Calumet River on the south, Cline Avenue on the east, and the Conrail railroad on the west. Hessville is also adjacent to the City of Gary on the east, the Town of Highland on the south, and the City of East Chicago to the north.

Located in the Calumet Region of Northwest Indiana, the Hessville community began as a mercantile settlement built along a rail line behind the leadership of a French baker named Joseph Hess. Mr. Hess purchased an inn in 1851 and soon thereafter opened a post office and general store which functioned as the beginnings of a town center near what is now Kennedy Avenue and 169th Street. Hessville grew modestly as railroads continued to bring employment opportunities to support nearby Chicago. The community was a major settlement location of Lake County for many years until being surpassed in economic strength by the neighboring community of Hammond, which annexed Hessville in 1923. Hessville's location as the southeasternmost portion of Hammond provided ample land for new land uses as needed. Moderate population growth continued in Hessville until a significant housing boom in the 1950s, which provided residences for thousands of new industrial workers of nearby steel mills and refining operations.

Today, Hessville is an attractive and desirable community noted for its quality residential neighborhoods, environmentally significant natural areas, excellent regional access for commercial and industrial businesses, and its variety of public and institutional amenities. The Hessville Neighborhood also has a variety of historical, architectural, and cultural features that stem from its early history during the mid-nineteenth century and its heritage of development throughout the twentieth century.

In terms of physical development, Hessville is primarily a single-family residential community but includes some multi-family housing options as well.

Commercial uses are concentrated along Kennedy Avenue and in the area around 169<sup>th</sup> Street/Grand Avenue and provide a variety of goods and services for neighborhood, City and regional customers. Industrial uses are concentrated in the area north of the Gibson Woods Nature Preserve, the 169<sup>th</sup> Place Industrial Park, and the area south of the Borman Expressway. These areas contain a number of active industrial and heavy commercial uses that support a significant employment base in the neighborhood.

Hessville also contains a large amount of land devoted to parks, recreational areas, and nature preserves all of which add significantly to the neighborhood's image and character.

There is some vacant land remaining for residential, commercial and industrial uses at selected locations throughout the neighborhood.

As a built-up community, Hessville is expected to experience only modest future growth in population and households. Market trends suggest that there will continue to be demand for new residential, commercial and employment/industrial development in the future. New development might entail replacement of older existing uses, the redevelopment of marginal and deteriorated properties, and the development of remaining vacant land.

### ***Neighborhood Planning Process***

In the spring of 2000, the City selected a Consultant Team consisting of Trkla, Pettigrew, Allen & Payne, Inc. and HNTB Corporation to assist in the preparation of a Hessville *Neighborhood Plan*.

The planning process in Hessville has entailed a multi-phase program consisting of: 1) analyzing existing conditions, 2) identifying issues and concerns, 3) establishing an overall vision for the neighborhood, 4) formulating goals and objectives, 5) preparing neighborhood-wide plans for land-use, transportation, and community facilities; 6) developing plans and policies for key subareas and 7) preparing final plan and implementation recommendations.

Hessville's planning program has entailed a high degree of local input and participation. A close working relationship was established between City staff and the Consultant Team. A 15-member Citizens Advisory Committee was appointed to work with the Consultant Team throughout the course of the study. This Committee along with a number of additional neighborhood stakeholders maintained consistent, participatory roles throughout the process. Key person interviews, community workshops and a community survey were undertaken early in the process to elicit ideas and perceptions about issues and potentials within Hessville. Public meetings were also undertaken at key junctures to present information, discuss findings and conclusions, and establish consensus.

### ***Purpose of the Neighborhood Plan***

The *Neighborhood Plan* serves as an official policy guide for physical improvement and development in Hessville. The Plan considers not only the immediate needs and concerns of the community, but also projects improvement and development 10 to 15 years in the future.

The Plan is "comprehensive" in both scope and coverage. It encompasses the use of land and buildings, the movement of vehicles and pedestrians, and the provision of parks, schools, utilities and other public facilities. It also addresses residential areas, commercial areas, public and institutional lands, and public rights-of-way.

The *Neighborhood Plan* establishes “ground rules” for private improvement and development. It provides guidelines by which the Plan Commission and Common Council can review and evaluate private development proposals. The Plan also provides a guide for public investments and capital improvements, and can help to ensure that local public dollars are allocated effectively.

The *Neighborhood Plan* provides a basis for refining the zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations and other development codes, all of which are used to implement planning policies and recommendations.

Finally, the *Neighborhood Plan* can serve as a marketing tool to promote Hessville’s unique assets, and can be used to help attract families, new business, and desirable new investment and development to the community.

### ***Organization of the Plan Report***

The *Neighborhood Plan* report is divided into five sections, as follows:

- **SECTION 1: Community Conditions and Potentials.** This section presents an overview of the physical development conditions and potentials of the Hessville Neighborhood. It is based on a review of previous plans and studies, data collected from City staff, and investigations undertaken by the Consultant Team. It highlights existing conditions and summarizes the key issues and concerns to be addressed in the *Neighborhood Plan*.
- **SECTION 2: A Vision for the Future.** This section describes, in general terms, the kind of community that Hessville should be in the future. It includes a vision statement which describes an “ideal form and function” for the community in the year 2010, and a list of goals and objectives that provide more specific guidelines for the *Neighborhood Plan*.
- **SECTION 3: Neighborhood-Wide Plan.** The Neighborhood-Wide Plan establishes an overall framework for improvement and development within Hessville over the next 10 to 15 year period. It presents area-wide policies and recommendations for land-use, transportation and community facilities.
- **SECTION 4: Subarea Plans.** The Subarea Plans build upon the generalized guidelines established in the Neighborhood-Wide Plan, and provide more specific improvement and development recommendations for four geographic areas which are of special concern to the City and neighborhood: a) Kennedy Avenue Corridor; b) the 169<sup>th</sup> Street/Grand Avenue area; c) the area south of the Borman Expressway; and d) the Gibson Woods/Michigan Street Corridor.
- **SECTION 5: Implementation.** This section highlights the implementation aspects of the *Neighborhood Plan*’s major improvement and development recommendations and is intended to help the City of Hammond organize and initiate the Plan implementation process.

### ***Maps and Graphics***

The Hessville *Neighborhood Plan* emphasizes the use of full-color maps and graphics to document existing community conditions and to highlight planning policies and recommendations.

The City hopes that this approach will convey planning and development data clearly and concisely, and that it will help make the *Neighborhood Plan* serve as a user-friendly document in the years ahead.

### ***Background and Reference Material Report***

Background materials assembled throughout the planning process have been compiled in a separate reference report to this *Neighborhood Plan*, which includes results of several community outreach activities, a review of demographic conditions and characteristics, an overview of market trends and potentials, and brief descriptions of existing funding programs.



**SECTION 1: Community Conditions & Potentials**

***Hessville Neighborhood Plan***  
*Hammond, Indiana*

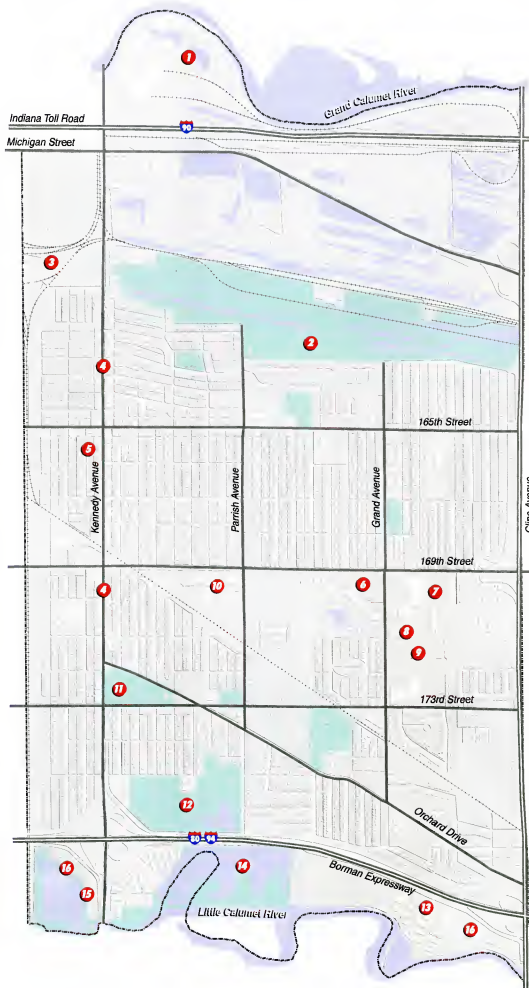


## Introduction

**S**ection 1 of the Plan documents information about physical development conditions within the neighborhood. It addresses land-use, zoning, parks and recreation, community facilities, transportation, environmental conditions, and public utilities. Section 1 highlights existing conditions and points out the major issues and concerns addressed in the next sections of the neighborhood plan.

### Neighborhood Points of Interest:

- 1 - Environmentally sensitive lands near the Grand Calumet River.
- 2 - Gibson Woods Nature Preserve.
- 3 - Indiana Harbor Belt Railroad Roundhouse.
- 4 - Kennedy Avenue commercial corridor.
- 5 - U.S. Post Office.
- 6 - Briar East Shopping Center.
- 7 - Morton High School.
- 8 - Public Library - Howard Branch.
- 9 - New Higgins Park residential development.
- 10 - 169th Place Industrial Park.
- 11 - Hessville Park, with historic Little Red School House.
- 12 - Dowling Park, location for new intergenerational community center.
- 13 - Kennedy Industrial Park.
- 14 - Carlson Oxbow Park.
- 15 - Lake County Interstate Visitors Information Center.
- 16 - New hotel developments.



### The Hessville Neighborhood:

Hessville encompasses the southeastern portion of the City of Hammond. It is bounded by the Grand Calumet River on the north; the Little Calumet River on the south; Cline Avenue on the east; and the Conrail railroad on the west.

The Hessville Neighborhood is briefly introduced below. The various components of the neighborhood are described in more detail on the pages that follow.

### Location:

The Hessville Neighborhood has excellent local and regional accessibility. I-90/94 (the Borman Expressway) passes through the southern portion of the neighborhood, with a full interchange at Kennedy Avenue. A new Visitor's Center for the Lake County Convention and Visitor's Bureau was recently constructed at that interchange. Kennedy Avenue and Cline Avenue are north-south arterials that connect Hessville with other parts of Hammond and surrounding communities.

### Existing Development Pattern:

The major portion of land within Hessville is devoted to single-family residential use. Hessville has the highest percentage of owner-occupied units in Hammond, and a lower than average vacancy rate. Existing housing stock ranges from small, older homes in the northern and western portions of the neighborhood, to newly developed homes and subdivisions in several locations. Construction recently began on the Higgins Park development, which includes 33 new single-family homes with an average price of \$155,000.

Most existing commercial development is located along Kennedy Avenue and 169th Street. Kennedy Avenue is the site of many small retail, service, office and auto-oriented uses. 169th Street is anchored by Briar East Shopping Center, the largest shopping area in the neighborhood. The most notable new commercial construction has occurred in the far southwest corner of the neighborhood, which has become the site of several new hotel developments.



library, a post office, and various clubs, fraternal organizations and similar facilities. New facilities are also planned, including a new "intergenerational community center" to be located at Dowling Park.

### Image and Appearance:

Overall, Hessville has an attractive and traditional urban image and character, with a grid pattern of streets, tree-lined parkways, generally well-maintained residential and commercial areas, attractive parks and institutional facilities, and several buildings with historic or architectural interest.

However, certain portions of the neighborhood are beginning to show signs of age, and several areas would benefit from design and appearance improvements. The condition of sidewalks, curbs, gutters, street surfaces and other infrastructure facilities also need improvement in several locations.

### Neighborhood Planning Program:

Hammond's Comprehensive Plan, completed in 1992, recommends that existing residential and commercial areas within the Hessville Neighborhood be maintained. The Plan also points out the potential for additional industrial and recreational development within the neighborhood.

However, there is the need for a new, more detailed plan for the Hessville Neighborhood which can better guide and coordinate various ongoing improvements and developments, respond to changing conditions and potentials, and address the unique needs of a mature urban neighborhood.

The new Plan will build upon previous public and private planning efforts, inject new ideas to meet the changing needs and potentials, and identify opportunities for desirable neighborhood improvements and developments.

Hessville has two light industrial areas: a) the Kennedy Industrial Park, located south of the Borman Expressway; and b) the 169th Place Industrial Park, located west of Parrish Avenue at 169th Place. Both areas have remaining vacant acreage. There are also several free-standing industrial facilities in the far northern portion of the neighborhood, as well as vacant land zoned for heavy industry.

The Hessville Neighborhood contains a significant amount of land devoted to parks, recreational areas and nature preserves. Gibson Woods Nature Preserve and Carlson Oxbow Park are large-scale recreational areas with a regional orientation which attract users from outside the neighborhood itself. Other done and swale natural sites under the control of the Shirley Heinze Foundation are located north of Gibson Woods.

Unlike many urban neighborhoods, Hessville contains a full complement of public buildings and institutional facilities which add to the neighborhood's unique image and character. These include schools, churches, two fire stations, two police substations, a branch

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Figure 2

## Generalized Existing Land-Use

The Hessville Neighborhood contains a diverse range of residential, commercial, industrial, public and institutional land-uses. Since Hessville is a mature neighborhood and most properties are already developed, the existing land-use pattern is an important consideration in the Neighborhood Plan. Figure 2 highlights generalized existing land-use, based on field surveys undertaken by the Consultant in June 2000.

### Map Legend:

- Single Family Residential
- Low Density Multi-Family
- Medium Density Multi-Family
- Retail and Mixed Commercial
- Commercial Service
- Office
- Educational
- Institutional
- Governmental
- Parks/Open Space
- Fraternal/Labor Organization
- Industrial
- Vacant Building
- Vacant Land



### Single-Family Residential Uses:

Hessville is primarily a single-family neighborhood and its existing residential areas are among its most important physical assets.

Hessville is composed of several different single-family areas, each with somewhat different characteristics such as street configuration, lot sizes, age of housing, and size and price of homes. Most of the land within existing single-family areas is developed, although a few vacant lots remain. Recently constructed single-family homes are scattered throughout the neighborhood, most notably the developing Higgins Park area.

Most single-family areas are sound and well maintained, although some residential structures are showing signs of deferred maintenance.

### Multi-Family Residential Uses:

Hessville contains several multi-family residential developments, including townhouses, apartments and condominiums.

Larger multi-family developments include Brook Forest Apartments, located just west of Briar East Shopping Center; River Park Apartments, located south of the Borman; Williamsburg Square, located along Grand Avenue between 165th and 167th Streets; Green Briar Apartments, located at Grand Avenue and 173rd Street; and Georgetown Homes, located at 169th Street and Cline Avenue.

Smaller multi-family developments are located in the blocks along and near Kennedy Avenue; along Parrish Avenue just north of the railroad; and at Grand Avenue and 171st Street.

While most multi-family uses are structurally sound, several of these properties are characterized by deferred building and grounds maintenance and other concerns.

### Commercial Uses:

The Kennedy Avenue corridor contains a diverse mix of businesses that serves the adjacent neighborhood, passing motorists, and the surrounding community and region. Prominent retail estab-

lishments include the new Walgreen's at 169th Street; Van Ti's Supermarket, located along 167th Street just west of Kennedy; Freddy's Steak House at 169th Street; and Ace Hardware, located near 162nd Street. Existing office and service uses include Lake Federal Savings, Bank Calumet, Regional Federal Credit, Ameritech and the Virgil Huber and Bocken Funeral Homes.

While efforts have been made in recent years to upgrade and enhance the Kennedy Avenue corridor, many of the blocks are still characterized by condition problems, marginal uses, scattered vacancies and a dated appearance.

New commercial development has occurred along the Borman Expressway in recent years. Most uses in this area are oriented to the motorists that travel this major interstate route. Residence Inn, Courtyard by Marriott, Fairfield Inn and two restaurants are located near the Kennedy Avenue interchange. Holiday Inn, Motel 6 and Super 8 Motel are located near the Cline Avenue interchange. While these areas are essentially developed, a few vacant properties still remain near Cline Avenue.

The largest single commercial development is Briar East Shopping Center, located at 169th Street and Grand Avenue. This center currently contains a recently developed Save-a-Lot as well as Family Dollar, True Value Hardware and Mercantile Bank. While the center is an important neighborhood focal point, it is characterized by underutilization, vacancies and a dated appearance.

Smaller commercial "nodes" are located near the intersections of 169th and Grand; 165th and Grand; 169th and Parrish; and 177th and Kennedy Avenue. Each of these areas is characterized by marginal uses, vacancies and appearance concerns.

### Industrial Uses:

The area north of the Gibson Woods Nature Preserve is an older "heavy" industrial area containing several "tank farms," Resco Products, Halstab Industries and AGA Gas. While this area has a significant amount of vacant land, it is

characterized by a number of environmental issues and concerns and is likely to experience only limited additional industrial development in the future.

In contrast, the area south of the Borman Expressway has remaining vacant land and is still undergoing development. This area has excellent accessibility and is convenient to a variety of business services and support facilities.

The small, self-contained 169th Place Industrial Park, anchored by a UPS facility, is essentially developed, although vacant land is located just south of the industrial area.

### Parks and Open Spaces:

Hessville has a significant amount of land devoted to parks, recreation and open space, and these areas add to the overall image and character of the neighborhood. In general, most residential areas are adequately served by park facilities. Parks and open spaces are highlighted in Figure 5.

### Public and Institutional Uses:

In contrast to many neighborhoods, Hessville has a full complement of public and institutional facilities conveniently located within its neighborhood boundaries. Public and institutional areas, including schools, governmental facilities and churches, are highlighted in Figure 6.

### Vacant Properties:

While Hessville is a mature, built-up neighborhood, it still contains several vacant land parcels and buildings scattered throughout its residential and business areas.

A "cluster" of vacant properties is located in the area bounded by 169th Street, Grand Avenue and the railroad, at the heart of the neighborhood. Other relatively large vacant parcels are located in the industrial area south of the Borman Expressway and along the Cline Avenue frontage road. While vacant land is also located north of Gibson Woods, most of this area is characterized by environmental concerns but may be available for limited sensitive development.

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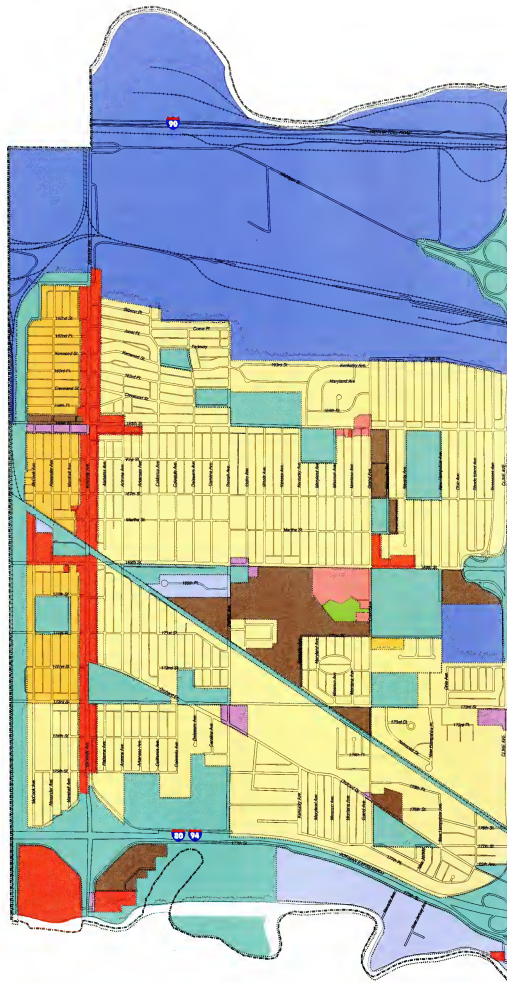
Figure 3

## Current Zoning

**Z**oning is an important tool in implementing planning policy. It establishes the types of uses to be allowed on specific properties, and prescribes the overall character and intensity of development to be permitted. City of Hammond zoning districts present in the Hessville Neighborhood are highlighted in Figure 3. Current zoning generally reflects existing land-use within the neighborhood, with a few exceptions. Revision or modification of the Zoning Ordinance is an important consideration for implementing Plan recommendations.

### Map Legend:

- R-1: Single-Family Residential
- R-2: Two-Family Residential
- R-3: Medium-Density Residential
- C-1: Local Commercial
- C-2: Shopping Center
- C-4: General Commercial
- I-1: Light Industrial
- I-2: Manufacturing
- S-1: Institutional and Open Space
- S-2: Planned Unit Development



**R-1 Single-Family Residential** is intended to serve single-family detached dwellings set on large building lots. Conditional uses include: many public and semi-public uses, communications facilities or equipment, and boarding or rooming services. The minimum lot area for residential uses is 7,500 square feet with a minimum lot width of 60 feet. No structure may exceed 35 feet in height except non-residential buildings, which are allowed a maximum height of 65 feet depending on lot size. No building may occupy more than 25 percent of the total lot size.

The R-1 District is the most common zoning district in Hessville, encompassing the majority of properties east of Kennedy Avenue and nearly all of the area north of 169th Street.

**R-2 Two-Family Residential** is intended to serve single- and two-family dwellings set on medium-sized lots. In addition to these residential uses, any use permitted in the R-1 district is also allowed on a conditional basis. The minimum lot area for single-family dwellings is 6,250 square feet and 7,500 square feet for two-family dwellings. Maximum allowed height for any type of residential structure is 35 feet, or 2 1/2 stories. For other permitted uses, building height is restricted to 65 feet, depending on lot size. No building may encompass more than 30 percent of total lot size.

The R-2 District covers most properties north of 173rd Street and west of Kennedy Avenue.

**R-3 Medium-Density Residential** is intended to serve single-, two-, and multi-family dwellings set in a medium-density living environment. Single-family attached dwellings (not exceeding 6 units per building), and associated commercial activities (i.e. leasing office) are also permitted. Conditional uses include: non-residential uses permitted in the R-1 District, professional offices, mobile home parks, group care homes, and boarding or group housing. The minimum lot area per dwelling unit varies depending on use. Buildings must be no taller than 35 feet, or 3 stories, except-

ing towers. Building coverage is restricted to the following amounts of lot size: single-family detached-30%; single-family attached-40%; two-family-30%; multi-family-40%.

The R-3 District encompasses several relatively large locations between 169th and 173rd Streets, in the central portion of the neighborhood.

**C-1 Local Commercial** is intended to provide day-to-day convenience shopping and service needs of nearby residents. Primary permitted uses are: retail and service businesses, professional services, governmental functions, and accessory uses. Conditional uses include: public buildings, schools, hospitals, museums, churches, libraries, and residential uses (provided they occupy no more than 50% of the total building square footage). Maximum allowable height is 40 feet except for churches, hospitals, or public buildings, which can be built to 70 feet depending on lot size. Buildings may not occupy more than 60% of total lot size.

C-1 is found in a few isolated locations within the neighborhood.

**C-2 Shopping Center** provides settings for groupings of businesses, promoting efficient and convenient retail shopping. Permitted uses include retail, service, department stores, parking garages, and restaurants. Business services, hotels, equipment sales/wholesale, medical laboratories, office buildings, small publishers, and group housing are allowed conditionally. All assembled properties in a C-2 district must be at least 4 acres in total size and all buildings must be no more than 45 feet, or three stories, in height.

The Briar East Shopping Center is within the C-2 District.

**C-4 General Commercial** allows for larger-lot uses that typically entail little comparison shopping, require automobile access, and may not be compatible with other commercial or residential uses. Uses permitted include: those listed in C-1, as well as automobile sales and service, building materials, contractors, food processing and distribution,

rental equipment, and material handling equipment sales and service. Conditional uses include: animal care and boarding, small laundries and packaging services, billboards, and arcades. Buildings may not occupy more than 50% of the total site area and must be no taller than 40 feet, or three stories.

The C-4 District encompasses the entire Kennedy Avenue frontage, as well as several parcels west of Kennedy Avenue on 169th Street.

**I-1 Light Industrial** is intended to provide for heavy commercial and light manufacturing activities which do not create serious problems of compatibility with other adjacent land-uses. Permitted uses include: uses similar to C-4, as well as fabrication assembly and packaging, grinding, milling, production, and repair services. Outdoor storage and all uses permitted in the I-2 Manufacturing District are allowed conditionally. Buildings must not occupy more than 50% of the total site area and must be no taller than 35 feet, except on larger sites, where 65 feet may be the maximum height.

The I-1 District encompasses the 169th Place Industrial Park as well as the industrial area south of the Borman Expressway.

**I-2 Manufacturing** provides suitable areas (typically sites larger than 10 acres) for heavy industrial uses and protects such properties from adjacent non-compatible uses. Permitted uses include: uses permitted in the I-1 District, as well as bulk storage, manufacturing, construction material processing/handling, laundries, warehousing, wholesaling, and billboards. Sand or gravel quarrying, scrap processing/storage, explosive/flammable material storage, and truck terminals may be allowed conditionally. The processing, manufacturing, or storage of toxic materials is not allowed. Buildings must not occupy more than 50% of the total site area and must be no taller than 35 feet, except on larger sites, where 65 feet may be the maximum height.

The I-2 District encompasses the northern portion of the Hessville Neighborhood.

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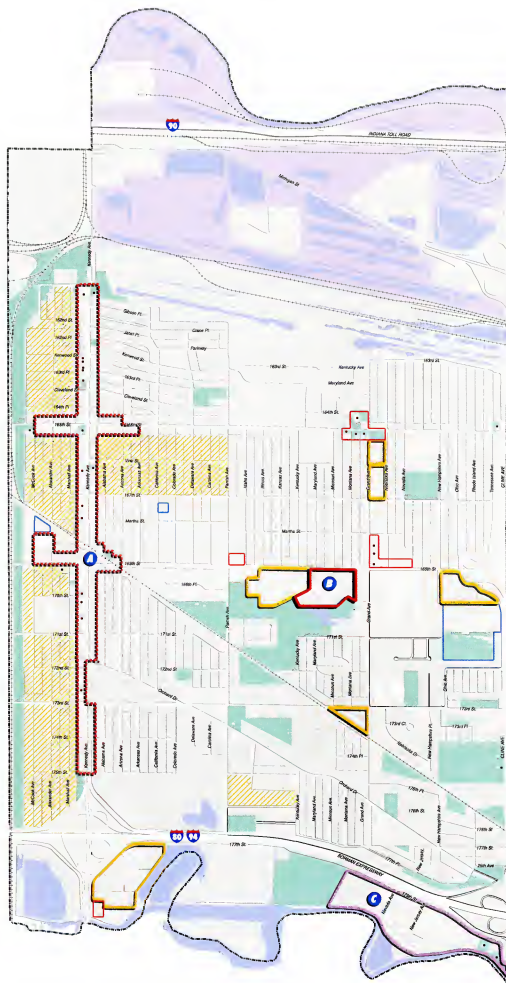


## Land-Use Issues & Concerns

**F**igure 4 highlights the major land-use issues and concerns addressed in the Hessville Neighborhood Plan. This summary is based on investigations undertaken by the Consultant, materials collected by City staff, and meetings with the Project Advisory Committee. The list of issues also reflects the ideas and concerns voiced by local residents and business persons during the various community outreach activities.

### Map Legend:

-  Vacant land that may have potential for development.
-  Vacant buildings with potential for reuse or redevelopment.
-  Single-family residential areas in need of improvement.
-  Multi-family residential properties in need of improvement.
-  Kennedy Avenue corridor should be upgraded and enhanced.
-  Briar East Shopping Center should be improved as a commercial focal point for Hessville.
-  Small commercial "nodes" should be either revitalized or redeveloped.
-  Determine the development potential of vacant lands north of Gibson Woods.
-  Continue to improve and develop Kennedy Industrial Park.
-  Other properties with potential for improvement or redevelopment.



### Residential Areas:

- Hessville's single-family areas are among its most important assets. The new Plan should establish policies and guidelines for maintaining and enhancing the condition and character of all existing residential areas.
- The Plan should consider options for improving residential properties that are showing signs of decline. It should also determine if certain deteriorated residential properties should be redeveloped.
- Of particular concern are Hessville's multi-family developments. The Plan should strive to upgrade the image, appearance and condition of multi-family developments and help make them more positive components of the neighborhood.
- There continues to be demand for new residential development. The Plan should determine the amount, type and location of new residential development to be promoted within Hessville including: a) "infill" and replacement housing in existing residential areas, b) new single-family, and c) new housing for senior citizens and other special needs groups.

### Commercial Areas:

- While improvements have been made along Kennedy Avenue, a number of blocks are characterized by marginal uses, scattered vacancies, underutilization and a dated appearance. The Plan should establish guidelines for upgrading the Kennedy Avenue corridor, including improvement to the store mix, parking, pedestrian amenities, and the appearance of storefronts and the public right-of-way. The Plan should also consider more significant redevelopment options for portions of the corridor while respecting its historic architecture, especially near 169th and Martha Streets.

- The Briar East Shopping Center is the most central commercial area in Hessville and is an important focal point for the neighborhood. However, the center is characterized by underutilization, vacancies, poorly maintained parking lots and site improvements, and a dated image and appearance. The Plan should explore alternatives for upgrading the Briar East Center, ranging from the improvement of existing buildings and site features, to major shopping center redevelopment. Issues to be considered include the store mix; building appearance; and the design of parking lots, access drives, pedestrian facilities and landscaping.
  - The Plan should encourage continued development and promotion of the commercial and business area south of the Borman Expressway as a major destination within the Hessville Neighborhood. To the extent possible, connections between this area and the remainder of the neighborhood should be improved.
  - The Plan should establish improvement programs for Hessville's smaller commercial "nodes." If possible, these areas should be revitalized to help serve the day-to-day needs of nearby residents.
- ### Industrial Areas:
- The Plan should promote continued improvement and development of Hessville's industrial districts including new construction and the replacement of obsolete industrial facilities.
  - The Plan should identify older, obsolete industrial properties subject to change and assess alternatives for reuse or redevelopment.
  - The Plan should explore techniques for improving the appearance of industrial properties that are visible from major streets and residential areas. Improved screening, fencing and peripheral landscaping should be considered.

### Vacant Lands:

- The Plan should analyze vacant parcels and buildings and determine the most appropriate use of these properties in the future. The Plan should outline the type, scale and character of new development to be promoted in each location.

### Development Codes:

- The Hammond Zoning Ordinance and other development codes should be reviewed to ensure that they complement and reinforce the policies and recommendations of the Hessville Neighborhood Plan. In particular, all zoning district designations and district requirements should reflect the land-use policies established in the new Plan. For example, issues to be considered include:

- a) All of the land located north of Gibson Woods is zoned for heavy industrial use. However, most of this area is characterized by environmental concerns and much of it is designated for park and public open space and sensitive industrial development.
- b) Most of the Kennedy Avenue frontage, which is characterized by small sites located directly adjacent to residential properties, is zoned C-4. However, according to the ordinance, the C-4 District is intended to accommodate uses that "require larger sites and buildings and often provide services which are not compatible with other commercial or residential districts."
- c) Much of the remaining vacant land within the heart of Hessville is zoned for multi-family residential use, which may or may not represent the most desirable or appropriate use of these properties in the future.

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## Parks, Recreation & Historic Resources

Figure 5

**T**he Hessville Neighborhood has a significant amount of land devoted to parks, recreation and open space. According to many residents, the parks and open space system is one of the neighborhood's most important assets.

A number of sites with local interest are also scattered throughout the neighborhood. Existing parks, open spaces and historic sites are highlighted in Figure 5, based on information received from the various agencies and organizations.

### Map Legend:

#### Parks and Open Spaces

- 1 - Gibson Woods Nature Preserve
- 2 - Gibson Park
- 3 - Harding School Park
- 4 - Phommom Park
- 5 - Hessville Park
- 6 - John Hill Baseball Field
- 7 - Wedgwood Softball Park
- 8 - Dowling Park
- 9 - Carlson Oxbow Park

#### Historic Sites and Buildings

- 10 - Indiana Harbor Belt Railroad Offices
- 11 - Indiana Harbor Belt RR Roundhouse
- 12 - Harding Park Historic District
- 13 - Turner-Meyn Building
- 14 - Kennedy Theatre
- 15 - YMCA Hansen Center
- 16 - Fire Station #6
- 17 - Little Red School House
- 18 - North Township Cemetery
- 19 - Original site of Little Red School House
- 20 - Site of Hess General Store



Lake County Interstate  
Visitors Information  
Center

### Hammond Parks Department:

Authorized by statute, the Hammond Parks Department was established in 1929 with oversight by a 4-member board that serves staggered terms. The Parks Department operates 6 park sites in Hessville encompassing a total of approximately 193 acres. Ranging in size from 4 to 103 acres, the parks provide a variety of traditional neighborhood recreation amenities including playground areas, ball fields, tennis courts, basketball courts, and/or picnic areas, as well as specialty features that serve the broader community and region including an outdoor ice skating rink and warming house, a swimming pool, fishing and hiking trails, and a veterans memorial.

While the Parks Department offers a range of programming for various ages, the most popular programs and facilities in Hessville include soccer, swimming, baseball, summer recreation sites, fishing, hiking and bird watching. The Parks Department and School City of Hammond coordinate programming and facilities through a formal partnership for a Saturday recreation program hosted in school buildings from October to May.

The Parks Department is in the process of planning several new improvements in Hessville, including: a) a master redevelopment plan for the 51-acre Dowling Park to include comprehensive site and facility improvements such as a regional soccer facility, possible expansion, construction and operation of an "intergenerational community center," and potential links to Carlson Oxbow Park; and b) a "fresh air" skate park for skateboarding, in-line skating, and "trick" riding.

Some short-term Park Department improvements include rest room upgrades to Hessville and Dowling Parks and new soccer fields at Dowling Park. Long-term development goals include expansion of Carlson Oxbow Park, bike and hike trail development, and opportunities for development along the Little Calumet River.

### Lake County Parks and Recreation:

The Lake County Parks and Recreation Department (LCPRD) owns and operates the Gibson Woods Nature Preserve at 6201 Parrish Avenue, which spans the northern portion of the Hessville Neighborhood. Dedicated by the State of Indiana in 1961, Gibson Woods is a 176-acre nature preserve that includes beach ridges, swale habitat areas, and various species of rare, endangered, or threatened flora and fauna of the region.

The LCPRD built an Environmental Awareness Center at Gibson Woods in 1984 that offers interpretative exhibits, meeting spaces, and classrooms for outdoor and interpretative education programming for all ages. Gibson Woods also includes 3.5 miles of hiking and walking trails for group or self-guided tours. Annual attendance at the Nature Preserve currently averages about 14,000.

As part of its 1998-2002 Vision Plan, LCPRD identifies nearby sites for Gibson Woods expansion or partnerships to enhance the regional "natural resource corridor" through additional green space, resource recovery, reforestation, and prairie reclamation and restoration. Environmentally sensitive sites or opportunity areas include nearby dune and swale areas, the Grand Cal Tern Site, and the Shell property in Hessville, as well as the 298-acre DuPont Tract wetland complex located in adjacent East Chicago. The Vision Plan also calls for renovation of the Awareness Center for larger classroom areas, a bird observation room and improved display and exhibit areas.

Site development concerns at Gibson Woods include difficult access to the portion of the Preserve east of Cline Avenue due to the closed underpass at 165th Street and land-use and buffering from development along Kennedy Avenue.

### Lake County Interstate Visitors Information Center:

The Lake County Interstate Visitors Information Center opened in December 1999 and is operated by the Lake County Convention and Visitors Bureau. The Center provides an array of visitor amenities, rest stop facilities and features promoting tourism and economic development in Lake County and the State of Indiana. The Center houses a 6,500 square foot exhibit hall showcasing free, bi-monthly exhibits promoting Lake County and/or Indiana; the John Dillinger Museum; and a 114-seat fiber optic theatre that allows for interactive meeting uses such as tele-conferences and distance learning. The distinctive architecture of the building represents the importance of Lake Michigan, the dunes, the steel industry, and agriculture in Lake County. Attendance at the Center has steadily grown monthly since its opening to a high of 10,000 in July, 2000.

### Historic Sites and Buildings:

Hessville has several homes, commercial buildings and public facilities that have local historic and/or architectural interest and these add to the charm and character of the neighborhood. Historic markers are scattered throughout the neighborhood commemorating special sites, events and environmental features.

Historic structures include the Indiana Harbor Belt Railroad offices and roundhouse, located in the far northwest corner of the neighborhood; the proposed Harding Park Historic District, a small grouping of "Chicago bungalows;" Turner-Meyn Building; Fire Station #6; Kennedy Theatre; the YMCA Hansen Center; and the Little Red School House, which has become a symbol for the neighborhood.

The City might consider more formal procedures for recognizing and designating structures and districts with historic value and explore new techniques that could help maintain and preserve these structures for future generations. Property owners should be encouraged to retain and restore historic structures.

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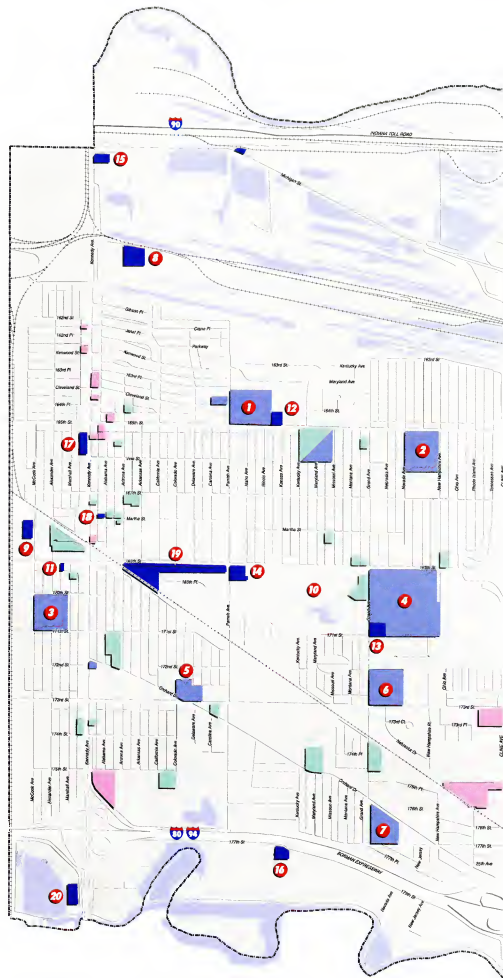


## Other Community Facilities

In addition to parks, open spaces and historic features, several other community facilities provide important services to the residents of Hessville and add to the overall "quality of life" within the neighborhood. These include public and private schools, fire and police stations, the library, and various other institutions and organizations. Existing community facilities are highlighted in Figure 6, based on information received by the various agencies and organizations.

### Map Legend:

- Educational
- Governmental
- Churches & Religious Facilities
- Labor & Fraternal Organizations
- 1 - Harding Elementary School
- 2 - Miller Elementary School
- 3 - Morton Elementary School
- 4 - Morton Senior High School
- 5 - Lee Caldwell Elementary School
- 6 - Scott Middle School
- 7 - Orchard Elementary School
- 8 - Police Firearms Training Facility
- 9 - Police Substation
- 10 - Police Substation
- 11 - Fire Station #6
- 12 - Fire Station #8
- 13 - Public Library - Howard Branch
- 14 - Water Tower
- 15 - North Pumping Station
- 16 - South Pumping Station
- 17 - US Post Office
- 18 - YMCA - Hansen Center
- 19 - North Township Cemetery
- 20 - Lake County Interstate Visitors Information Center



### School City of Hammond:

The Hessville Neighborhood is served by six schools operated by School City of Hammond: Morton, Harding, Caldwell, and Orchard Drive Elementary Schools, Scott Middle School, and Morton High School. Serving approximately 3,300 students in total, all schools were near capacity for the 2000-2001 school year. Elementary schools range in size from approximately 300 to 600 students; the middle school has nearly 700 students; and the high school has approximately 900 students. The trend in total enrollment, however, has declined over the past few years in most Hessville schools. School City also maintains the Miller School building for temporary classrooms to accommodate students of schools throughout Hammond that are being renovated or rebuilt.

Five of the seven School City buildings were built before 1970. While small repairs and improvements are completed at schools on an ongoing basis, all school buildings, except Morton Elementary, will need extensive remodeling in the near future.

School locations are regarded as good, but sites and parking availability are deemed inadequate at most locations. Particular site problems identified for the high school include insufficient land for future building expansions and off-street parking, and traffic congestion along Grand Avenue.

The most significant improvement in Hessville during 2000/2001 is remodeling and enlargement of the high school cafeteria.

Aside from physical improvements to individual schools, long-range planning for the School City system emphasizes the need for delivery of high-speed access to the Internet for each household. According to School City, opportunities for installation of carrier infrastructure for fiber optic cables should be implemented when streets and sidewalks are installed or resurfaced. Other considerations for school site development include the provision of adequate buffers when streets are widened or traffic circulation is increased.

### Fire Department:

The Hammond Fire Department operates two fire stations in Hessville: Station #6 located at 169th Street and Kentucky Avenue and Station #8 at 165th Street and Alexander Avenue. The personnel and equipment (14 personnel, 2 engines, 1 truck and 1 ambulance) for the two stations are considered satisfactory for current demands and modest new development.

Station #8, built in 1959, is considered to be in good condition but requires an updated heating system. Station #6 is an older building that is considered to be in fair condition with an inadequate site; the station requires new windows. Both stations require the installation of central air conditioning and expansion of parking.

### Police Department:

The Hammond Police Department operates two substations in Hessville, located in the Briar East Shopping Center and at 6820 McCook Avenue. The McCook location conducts Crime Prevention, Crime Watch, Police Explorer and crossing guard programs and is resourced with a part-time officer, a meeting room, and office equipment. The Briar East location provides bicycle storage and serves as an office outpost for sector, D.A.R.E. and G.R.E.A.T. officers. Both buildings are considered to be in good condition with no plans for renovation. However, the McCook location requires additional office equipment and a larger meeting space.

The Police Department also operates a firearms range located along the Gibson Woods Transfer Road.

### Howard Branch Library:

The 8,000 square foot Howard Branch of the Hammond Library was opened in 1965 at 171st Street and Grand Avenue. The library building and site are considered to be in good condition with satisfactory parking and site access.

The Howard collection includes over 32,000 volumes (books, videos, audios) and users have access to all books and other materials of the Hammond Library system through daily inter-location deliv-

eries. Other resources include 6 computers, two meeting rooms, and various programs for youth and adults.

Several improvements to the building and site are planned in 2001 to meet library needs over the next twenty years including interior renovations and creating parking lot access from 172nd Street.

### United States Post Office:

The U.S. Post Office operates one facility in Hessville, located on Kennedy Avenue just south of 165th Street. The Post Office site, location, parking, and building are considered to be adequate and there are no plans for expansion.

### YMCA:

The former Hansen Branch Library building at 2823 Martha opened as a community center in October 1998. The facility is operated by the Hammond-Area YMCA and serves as a drop-in recreation center for seniors, adults, children and families providing meeting space, computers, art class workshops, and pre-school activities. As a tenant of the space, the YMCA identifies short-term, routine maintenance needs such as interior/exterior painting and entryway repairs as well as the need for long-term improvements such as energy-efficient windows, restroom modifications, plaster and flooring upgrades or replacements, and expanded parking areas.

### Churches & Fraternal Organizations:

The Hessville Neighborhood is home to many churches that provide a number of resources contributing to the overall quality and character of the community. Some churches have recently been built, expanded, or improved adding focal points of architectural or historic interest to the community. Saint Catherine of Siena operates an elementary school and Our Lady of Perpetual Help has spearheaded the initiative for a Hessville intergenerational center at Dowling Park.

Hessville also contains a large number of fraternal organizations such as the Knights of Columbus, the Fraternal Order of Police, and several union facilities that add to the overall character and identity of the neighborhood.

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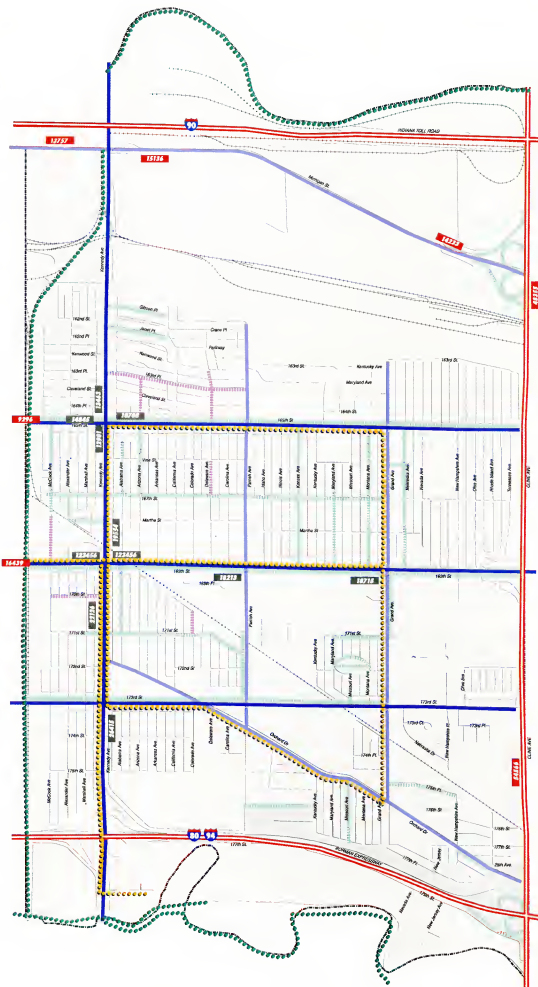


## Existing Transportation

The transportation system in Hessville consists of streets, highways, public transportation, and recreational trails. The traditional grid system allows for easy circulation within the neighborhood and allows for efficient and convenient movement to and from other areas of Hammond. Figure 7 provides an overview of the street classification system, traffic statistics, planned street improvements, public transportation routes and proposed recreational trails. It is based on discussions with City staff, other public agencies, and field visits undertaken by the Consultant.

### Map Legend:

- Functional Street Classification:**
- Principal Arterial
  - Minor Arterial
  - Collector
  - Local Street
- 1995/1996 ADT **1997**  
1999 ADT **1999**
- Public Transportation Route
- Street Projects- Construction
- Street Projects- Planned
- Proposed Recreational Trails



### Street System:

The Hessville Neighborhood has over 35 miles of roadways ranging in classification from principal arterials to local residential streets. Streets are laid out in a traditional grid pattern allowing ease of access in either a north/south or east west direction of travel. Orchard Drive bisects the neighborhood in a diagonal direction. Interstate 90 lies to the north of the neighborhood and Interstate 80/94 (the Borman Expressway) lies to the south.

### Functional Classification System:

The functional classification system is one of the most important determining factors in highway and roadway design and should be the underlying criteria for future land-use patterns.

Arterials are characterized by a capacity to quickly move relatively large volumes of traffic with an often restricted function to serve abutting properties.

Principal Arterials include freeways, I-90 and I-80/94 which are characterized by full control of access and high design speeds.

Minor Arterials provide lower travel speeds, accommodate shorter trip lengths and lower traffic volumes, and provide more access to property. They include Kennedy and Cline Avenues, which provide north/south connections within and beyond Hammond, and 165th, 169th, and 173rd Streets, which provide east/west connections through Lake County.

Collectors act as intermediate links between the arterial system and points of origin and destinations. Michigan Street, Parrish Avenue, Grand Avenue, and Orchard Drive act as collector streets for Hessville. All other streets are considered to be local roads which are characterized by direct access to adjacent properties and low travel speeds.

### Capacity Standards:

In order to determine if the capacity of each roadway was sufficient, Average Daily Traffic (ADT) statistics were collected and compared against the func-

tional classification of the roads. Generally, local streets are designed to carry low traffic volumes at low speeds for relatively short distances. They are not usually evaluated in a capacity analysis. In addition, traffic flow along the principal arterials was not examined as a part of the current analysis.

The traffic flows of the collector streets are controlled by the capacity of each signalized or stop controlled intersection along the street. Visual observation showed that vehicle delay was minimal on streets with stop sign controls because the cross street volumes were low enough to provide sufficient gaps in the traffic stream to safely cross the intersection.

Cline Avenue is an elevated arterial road providing access only at Michigan Street, 169th Street, and the Borman Expressway. Existing ADT's indicate that there is sufficient capacity along this limited access roadway based on the functional classification.

Kennedy Avenue provides two lanes of traffic in each direction with left turn lanes and traffic signals at the intersections with the arterials. Striped parking lanes exist between 161st and 171st Streets. A median two-way turn lane is provided between the Borman Expressway and 171st Street. ADT's are within range for a four-lane roadway.

169th Street handles a heavier volume of traffic than either 165th or 173rd Streets due to its continuity through Cline Avenue. Two lanes of traffic exist in each direction with left turn lanes provided at Grand and Kennedy Avenues. ADT's are within range for a four-lane roadway. Traffic flow along 165th and 173rd Streets do not appear to be a problem.

### Street Improvement Projects:

Several street improvement projects are proposed in the Hessville Neighborhood. These include improvements to Arizona, Delaware, Colorado, 163rd, and 169th Streets, as well as bridge and ramp improvements along Kennedy Avenue, Cline Avenue, and the Borman Expressway.

### Public Transportation:

The Hammond Transit System (HTS) currently operates fixed route bus service. Routes 2, 3 and 4 serve the Hessville Neighborhood. Paratransit service is also provided. Inter-city bus service to the region includes Greyhound, Trailways, and Indian Trails.

Passenger rail service is provided to northwest Indiana by Amtrak, with a Hammond-Whiting stop located on Calumet Avenue. The Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District (NICTD) provides commuter rail service between South Bend and Chicago. The Hammond station is located on Holman Avenue.

### Airports:

The Gary Airport is located at the junction of Interstate 90, Indiana Route 912 (Cline Avenue) and U.S. Route 12. It is the busiest general aviation airport in northwest Indiana. An Airport Master Plan is under preparation and will be released shortly. The expansion of the airport has caused concern for residents of the Hessville Neighborhood due to their proximity to the airport.

### Bikeways and Recreational Trails:

The Hammond Park Department has a series of completed, designed or proposed bike and hike trails which traverse the City. A proposed bike/hike trail would serve Hessville on the west edge of the neighborhood, down the NIPSCO right of way. This proposed path would link up with the proposed recreational trails along the Little Calumet and Grand Calumet Rivers. The Little Calumet River Flood Control Recreation Project includes flood protection together with recreation features along the main stem of the Little Calumet River from the Illinois/Indiana State Line to I-65 in Gary. A recreational trail is also proposed along the Grand Calumet River and will mostly likely be located on the north side of the river as it passes just north of Hessville.

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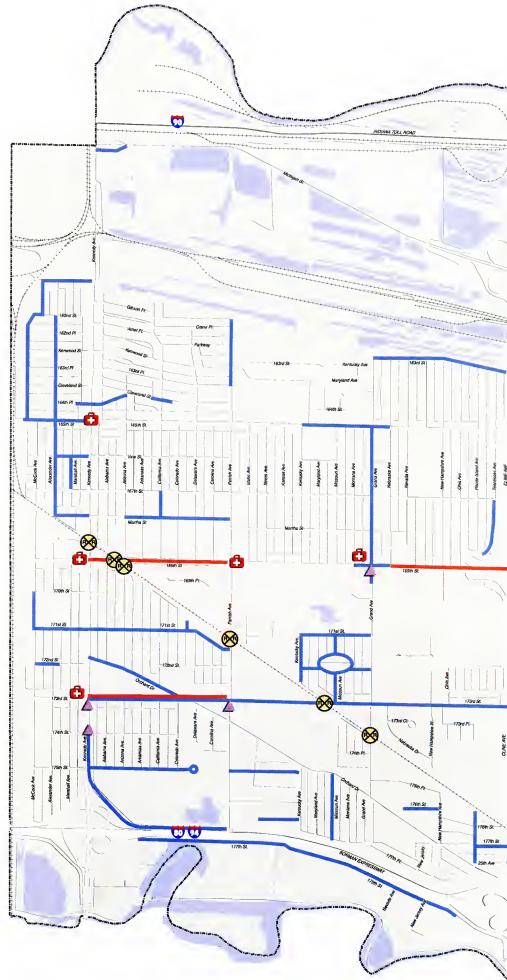
## Transportation Issues & Concerns

Figure 8

**A**reas of concern within Hessville's transportation system are highlighted in Figure 8. Areas of concern include high accident locations, streets lacking curb, gutter and sidewalks, and intersections needing improvement. The information is based on field visits undertaken by the Consultant and accident data collected from the Hammond Police Department.

### Map Legend:

- Street in need of Improvement  
(based on visual survey)
- At-Grade Railroad Crossing
- High Accident Area
- Future Congestion  
(Projection for Year 2020)
- Intersection in Need  
of Improvement



### High Accident Areas:

Accident data was provided by the Hammond Safety Department. The number of accidents from a two-year period, 1998 and 1999, indicate that there is a high incidence of accidents at the intersections of Kennedy Avenue and 165th Street, Kennedy Avenue and 169th Street, Kennedy Avenue and 173rd Street, Parrish Avenue and 169th Street, and Grand Avenue and 169th Street. The locations of the accidents generally correspond with streets that carry higher levels of traffic.

### Intersections and Roadways in Need of Improvement:

Visual observation by the Consultant suggests that potential congestion and traffic flow problems occur at the intersection of Grand Avenue and 169th Street. The intersection design requires improvement to accommodate the turning volumes from traffic generators at or near the intersection. These include the high school, library, and Briar East Shopping Center to the south, and multi-family and commercial developments to the west and east.

Other intersections that need to be examined include Kennedy Avenue and 174th Street, and Parrish Avenue and 173rd Street. The consultant for the redevelopment of Dowling Park has indicated a need for improvement at these intersections to create a more "user friendly" entrance into the park.

Visual observation also showed that there are sight distance problems along Kennedy Avenue due to the close proximity of curb parking at the non-signalized intersections. These parked vehicles create an obstacle for cars that want to either cross or turn onto Kennedy Avenue.

### Streets in Poor Condition:

Roadway segments that have obvious deficiencies, such as complete lack of curbs and gutters, sidewalks or very poor pavement are highlighted in Figure 8, based on a visual inventory of all streets undertaken by the Consultant.

Many residents have expressed concern over the condition of 173rd Street, which serves as a minor arterial through the neighborhood. In general, 173rd is in poor condition between Orchard Drive and Grand Avenue, as well as east of New Jersey Street.

### Future Traffic Projections:

A Congestion Management System (CMS) Committee, sponsored by the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC), modeled congestion for the year 2020 and determined that two sections of 169th Street and one section of 173rd Street would be congested during the morning peak period. Presumed contributing factors for congestion along 169th Street between Kennedy and Parrish Avenues are increased intersection turns, traffic operations, driveway turns and median turns. Congestion further east on 169th Street is due to signal timing, intersection turns, driveway turns, and median turns. Traffic operations is the presumed contributing factor along 173rd Street from Kennedy Avenue to Parrish Street.

Residents have also expressed concern about the future potential of 169th Street being classified as a "supplemental regional highway" in the Vision 2020 Plan produced by NIRPC.

### At-Grade Railroad Crossings:

Freight traffic and the numerous at-grade rail crossings within the neighborhood represent significant issues to residents of Hessville. The Norfolk Southern Railway main trunk line carries between 31 and 40 trains daily and crosses on a diagonal through the center of the neighborhood. Freight carried along this line includes coal, manufactured goods, agricultural products and primary metal products. The long, slow moving freight trains create substantial delays to travel, safety problems, lost productivity, and fragmentation of the neighborhood.

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## Environmental Conditions

Figure 9

**T**he Hessville Neighborhood has prominent natural features that enhance the beauty and desirability of the area. These natural areas include the Little Calumet and Grand Calumet Rivers, the Gibson Woods Nature Preserve and numerous wetland areas. Environmental concerns that negatively affect the neighborhood are the potentially contaminated sites associated with heavy industry. Figure 9 highlights significant existing environmental features as well as areas of environmental concern.

**Map Legend:**

- Floodplain
- Wetlands
- Potential Hazard Sites
- Levees/Floodwalls
- Gibson Woods
- Nature Preserve



### Water Features:

The Grand Calumet River is a significant natural feature lying to the north of Hessville. It has been significantly polluted over the years due to the industrial presence along its corridor.

The Little Calumet River, lying to the south, is another valuable natural resource. The Little Calumet River Basin Development Commission was formed in 1980 to serve as the local sponsor with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the Little Calumet River Flood Control and Recreation Project. Construction has already begun to provide numerous recreational opportunities along the river including trails, canoe launch areas, comfort stations, and picnic areas as well as protecting the surrounding neighborhoods from flood waters from the Illinois/Indiana State Line to Interstate 65 in the City of Gary.

### Flood Boundaries:

As part of the National Flood Insurance Program, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Federal Insurance Administration have established areas designated as flood zones within the City of Hammond. The Hessville Neighborhood is part of the Little Calumet River and Grand Calumet River Floodplains.

The FEMA Zone A boundary for the Grand Calumet River covers a significant portion of south Hessville. While flooding has been a significant problem in this area, the situation should be corrected as part of the Little Calumet River Flood Control and Recreation project and the construction of floodwalls and levees. Once constructed, any area outside the proposed levee walls will no longer be part of the floodplain.

### Wetlands:

Numerous wetlands are present in Hessville, including groupings in close proximity to the two rivers. An area is said to have "wetland hydrology" when there exists a condition of permanent or periodic inundation (a week or more) at least seasonally during an average rainfall year. Wetlands are usually classified

according to a system developed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The classifications that are present in Hessville are the palustrine and the riverine systems.

### Nature Preserves:

As described in Figure 5 above, Hessville is home to the Gibson Woods Nature Preserve located at the north end of Parrish Avenue. This nature preserve houses a nature center and hiking trails. The preserve contains several rare or sensitive plants, including paper birch, Kalm's St. John's-wort, and golden sedge.

### Threatened and Endangered Species:

Federally listed threatened and endangered species for Lake County, Indiana, include three plants (Mead's milkweed, dune thistle, and prairie white-fringed orchid), three insects (Ohio emerald dragonfly, American burying beetle, and the Karner blue butterfly) and two birds (piping plover and Peregrine falcon). The Grand Franklin Squirrel has also been listed in the vicinity of the Michigan Street corridor. It is not known if any reside in Hessville.

In addition, the Indiana Natural Heritage Inventory indicates that the Hessville area could contain several high quality natural community types, listed as "significant/no status but rarity warrants concerns." These community types include floodplain forests, lakes, ponds, prairies, oak savannas, and wetlands and forested areas, which are likely to be migratory bird concentration areas. These community types most likely exist around the Gibson Woods Nature Preserve, the Grand Calumet River, and the Little Calumet River. A request has been made to the Indiana Natural Heritage Inventory to identify any threatened and endangered species and significant natural communities in Hessville.

### Potential Hazardous Sites:

There are four areas of potentially hazardous sites in Hessville, and three areas of potentially hazardous sites in Gary, along the Hessville/Gary border. Environmental contaminants can hinder the opportunities for development and redevelopment in certain locations.

The three areas of concern in Gary, which are on the CERCLIS (US EPA's Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Information System) list include the MidCo I site on W. 15th Avenue, the HiD site on 9th Avenue and the 9th Avenue Dump. All three sites are closed and have had some remediation. It is not known what contaminants remain.

These contaminated sites caused a problem for Hessville prior to 1981. Due to an elevation difference between Gary and Hessville, floodwaters would bring contamination from these sites into the neighborhood. In order to prevent contamination, Hammond constructed a dike or "wall" to stop floodwater from flowing into Hessville. Construction of the "wall" occurred in 1981, forming a cul-de-sac for 160th Street at Cline Avenue and altering traffic patterns between Hammond and Gary.

Four additional sites of potential concern are: a) the Indiana Harbor Belt Railroad transport site located west of Kennedy Avenue and north of 161st Street in the railroad yard, b) the former Hammond Dump at 160th Street and Kennedy Avenue, c) a transport and disposal site for hazardous waste near Michigan Street and Cline Avenue, and d) the U.S. Smelter and Lead Refinery facility north of the Grand Calumet River and west of Kennedy Avenue. The two transport sites are on the RCRA (U.S. EPA's Resource Conservation and Recovery Act) list, and the lead refinery company is on the CERCLIS listing.

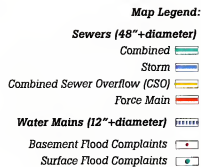
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Figure 10  
**Public Utilities**

**F**igure 10 provides an overview of existing public utilities serving the Hessville Neighborhood, including the water, storm and combined sewer systems. Figure 10 also displays flooding complaints that have been recorded by the Hammond Sanitary District, as well as other issues and concerns regarding public utilities.



### Sanitary, Storm and Combined Sewers:

Sanitary sewage is conveyed to the Hammond Sanitary District (HSD) treatment plant via both combined and separate sanitary sewers. Approximately 60 percent of Hessville is currently served by combined sewers, and the remaining 40 percent is served by separate sanitary and storm drainage facilities. All wastewater flows reach one of two pump stations that serve the area. The area these pump stations serve is divided approximately by 169th Street.

The portion of Hessville north of 169th Street is served primarily by combined sewers. All storm and wastewater flows reach the Kennedy North pump station located at Kennedy Avenue and Michigan Street. Low flows are pumped to the Hammond Sanitary District Waste Water Treatment Plant via a 24-inch force main.

During rainfall events, flow to the North pump station quickly exceeds the capacity of the sanitary pumps, and wet weather flows mixed with sanitary sewage are discharged directly to the Grand Calumet River via an 84-inch force main. The impact of this combined sewer overflow (CSO) was sampled and studied in great detail under a CSO Master Plan conducted for the Hammond Sanitary District. This study found that ambient concentrations of pollutants in the river were so high that CSO discharges had little impact on the water quality of the river. Hence, no recommendations were made to reduce or eliminate CSOs.

The portion of Hessville south of 169th Street is served primarily by separate sanitary and storm sewer systems, although there are still a few remaining combined sewers. This area also receives sanitary flows from the customer Town of Highland, Indiana. All wastewater flows reach the Kennedy Ejector pump station located in the Kennedy/Borman Interchange. Low flows are lifted so they can continue by gravity to the Southside Pump Station where they are pumped to the HSD for treatment.

During rainfall events, flow to the Southside pump station quickly exceeds the sanitary pumping capacity, and storm runoff mixed with sanitary sewage is discharged directly to the Little Calumet River. The CSO Master Plan determined that CSO discharges from the Kennedy Ejector pump station were having a negative impact on the Little Calumet River. As a result of these impacts and frequent basement backups, the City of Hammond is currently developing a plan to separate the remaining combined sewers in the area.

This area is bounded approximately by 169th Street on the north, 173rd Street on the south, the railroad tracks on the west, and Parrish Avenue on the east. Areas in Hessville that are served by combined sewers frequently experience basement backups during extreme rainfall events, while areas served by separated systems generally do not. Basement flood complaints have been tracked over several years to indicate the areas where flooding has occurred. Two sewer separation projects have been undertaken to alleviate the most problematic areas. The separation plan currently being developed for the area south of 169th Street as stated above and a project to separate sewers along Alexander and McCook Avenues between 165th and 169th Streets should help alleviate these problems.

### Water Distribution System:

The Hammond Water Works Department provides potable water to the Hessville Neighborhood. Hammond Water Works draws surface water from Lake Michigan, which is treated via two filtration plants located north of Hessville, along Lake Michigan. The reported combined capacity of both treatment plants is approximately 70 million gallons per day. The Hammond water distribution system contains approximately 400 miles of water mains, and three elevated storage tanks with a total storage capacity of 6.5 million gallons (MG).

The portion of the distribution system located within the Hessville Neighborhood is well looped in order to maintain satisfactory service. The backbone of the network is primarily made up of interconnected mains varying in sizes between 12 and 36 inches in diameter. Individual service mains within the neighborhood are typically 6 inches in diameter; however, a few 4 and 8-inch mains are also present. Water mains have been installed and upgraded to extend service to the Town of Griffith.

One of the City's three elevated storage tanks is located within Hessville, a 2.5 MG tank is located at Parrish Avenue and 169th Street. Consistent with a 10 to 15 year painting cycle, the Hessville storage tank was scheduled for repainting in 2000. The estimated remaining useful life of the tank is 50 years. While maintenance is performed on a routine basis, major ongoing concerns for these facilities include vandalism and weather. The personnel, equipment, site, building, location, and parking are considered satisfactory and adequate.



**SECTION 2: A Vision For the Future**

***Hessville Neighborhood Plan***  
*Hammond, Indiana*



## ***A Vision for Hessville***

### ***City of Hammond, Indiana***

**IN THE YEAR 2010**, Hessville is a friendly, attractive, well-cared-for and safe neighborhood that maintains a sense of small town livability while enjoying connections to amenities of the City and broader metropolitan region. Hessville is an active and socially supportive neighborhood of homes and neighbors, not simply houses and residents. Families, cultures, and generations find connections and a meaningful quality of life. The neighborhood offers robust living, recreation, working, educational, shopping, civic, and leisure-time environments that engage the community and invite visitors. Hessville is proud of its heritage and community and has established a distinctive identity through preservation of historic resources, exciting cultural programs and events, conservation of native natural and environmentally sensitive areas, innovative recreational facilities, and investment in residential, commercial and public spaces. A spirit of cooperation and respectful partnership has built the Hessville identity and sustains it in the future.

#### ***Strong Neighborhood Identity & Connections***

Hessville provides a gateway into Hammond as the City's easternmost neighborhood. Neighborhood identity is promoted through distinctive entryways and signs that highlight destinations and points of interest. Hessville heritage and neighborhood resources are actively marketed locally and regionally. Historic and architectural sites and features are celebrated as part of neighborhood festivals, seasonal tours, and cultural event planning and programming.

Neighborhood identity has been built and is strengthened by community organizations, community centers, places of worship, parks, the library, and schools. Each of these community facilities provides welcoming and actively-used gathering places for both formal and informal neighborhood activities. Community center facilities and programs have served as critical fibers of neighbor-to-neighbor networks.

### ***A Neighborhood of Homes***

Attractive and well-maintained residential areas are the foundation of the Hessville neighborhood. The community is characterized primarily by single-family homes that range in size, architectural style, and price. Pride in ownership is shown through investment in and care for home exteriors, yards, and gardens.

New single-family homes that appeal to the contemporary tastes and lifestyles of homebuyers have been built in areas of the neighborhood that were formerly under-developed or undeveloped. Rehabilitation of existing homes has been encouraged, resourced and accomplished through City grant programs, strong code enforcement and neighbor-to-neighbor networks.

The neighborhood also provides choices and quality housing for residents throughout the life cycle. Existing multi-family housing developments are well-maintained and well-managed. Developments with chronic property management and maintenance problems have experienced changes in ownership, rehabilitation, and, in some cases, redevelopment for new uses. New senior housing with assisted living resources and amenities has also been built in the community.

The underlying supports of Hessville's strong residential character are quality schools, responsive and efficient city services, and an overall sense of friendliness, comfort, and security.

### ***Vibrant Commercial Areas***

Anchored by Kennedy Avenue, Hessville's shopping areas offer a vibrant mix of goods, services, and activities. Shopping centers and districts have been revitalized with (i) public investments in infrastructure and visually unifying streetscape features and (ii) private investment in buildings and storefronts. The City has worked with the business community to establish design guidelines and incentives to encourage new construction and rehabilitation projects that are compatible with the neighborhood's vision for the scale and function of individual shopping areas in the neighborhood.

New businesses have located in Hessville that serve the neighborhood but also provide destination shopping for visitors. New and well-established businesses combine to provide an exciting array of retail, dining, service, cultural entertainment, and clusters of specialty retail businesses.

Parking has been strategically located to balance shopper convenience with business needs and district streetscape designs. Off-street parking lots have been improved with landscaping, screening, and attractive signage. Directional signage is strategically located throughout the shopping districts informing motorists where to find convenient off-street parking.

***Valued Recreation  
and Natural Areas***

Hessville's parks, recreation and natural areas are regarded as exceptional in the region. Parks provide a range of activities and spaces for both active and passive recreation. Dowling Park is actively used with a range of features that were completed as part of a master plan including an intergenerational community center. Hessville Park serves as a multi-activity center of the neighborhood with a range of recreational features and a variety of community, historical and cultural programs.

The Gibson Woods Nature Preserve County Park, Seidner Dune and Swale State Preserve, and Carlson Oxbow Park and other natural areas are renowned regionally as beautiful preserves of native eco-systems. Good stewardship of these natural areas has been sustained through balanced use and protection strategies, extensive education programs, and environmentally-appropriate recreation options. Park, recreation and conserved natural areas have been expanded and new recreation opportunities have been successfully implemented. Park, recreation and natural area destinations are conveniently connected by bike and hike trails.

***Productive  
Industrial Areas***

Industrial areas are productive employment and business centers. New industrial uses have been built on formerly undeveloped, under-developed, or under-utilized sites within existing industrial parks or areas. Environmental impacts of past and new industrial development have been reduced or limited, respectively. Industrial developments adjacent to natural areas have been designed to minimize negative impacts and enhance the viability of the natural areas. Residential areas are appropriately buffered from industrial areas. All industrial areas are well-maintained, easily accessible, and conveniently supplied by support and business services.

***Improved Access  
and Mobility***

Long-term goals for improving access and mobility throughout the neighborhood have been achieved. Most significantly, delay and congestion impacts of railroad routes have been reduced; commercial streetscapes have been enhanced to promote safe, attractive and user-friendly pedestrian environments; and bicycle/walking trails have been completed that route to community facilities, destinations, points of interest and neighboring communities. Regional public transit options have been expanded and are linked to provide better connections to neighboring communities, the Chicago-Gary Airport and the South Shore rail line.

***Teamwork:  
Making it Happen***

Bringing the Hessville neighborhood vision to life over the past ten years has been due to the efforts, energies, participation, leadership, and cooperation of many stakeholders of the community, including: residents, the City of Hammond; Lake County; property owners and merchants; local banks and financial institutions; developers and real estate brokers; and neighborhood groups and organizations. Roles and responsibilities included: identifying challenges, building solutions, making decisions, financing projects, taking action, and expanding the circle of people invested in the vision. The process for implementing projects and building and sustaining the Neighborhood Plan Team has been recognized as a model in Hammond and in the region.





## ***GOALS and OBJECTIVES***

The planning goals and objectives are designed to help achieve the “Vision Statement for Hessville” and provide more specific guidelines for the *Neighborhood Plan*.

The goals and objectives strive to transform the collective neighborhood values expressed in the “Vision Statement” into operational guidelines for the planning program.

Goals and objectives each have a distinct and different purpose in the planning process:

- **Goals** describe a desired end situation toward which planning efforts should be directed. They are broad and long-range. They represent an end to be sought, although they may never actually be fully attained.
- **Objectives** describe more specific actions that should be undertaken in order to advance toward the overall goals. They provide more precise and measurable guidelines for planning action.

The goals and objectives presented below are based on: a) the visioning workshop and the resulting Vision Statement; b) the community survey; and c) key person interviews and other meetings undertaken in the planning process.

Goals and objectives are grouped into eight categories:

1. ***Neighborhood Image and Identity***
2. ***Housing and Residential Areas***
3. ***Commercial Areas***
4. ***Industrial Areas***
5. ***Parks, Recreation, and Natural Areas***
6. ***Community Facilities and Utilities***
7. ***Environment***
8. ***Transportation***

## ***Neighborhood Image and Identity***

**Goal:** *A distinctive neighborhood image and identity that conveys vitality, hospitality, tradition, and commitment.*

### ***Objectives:***

1. Design and locate visually unifying markers, landscaping, signage or other features at entryways, points of interest, and along primary travel routes (motor, bicycle, and pedestrian).
2. Continue to build stewardship efforts for cultural, historic, and architectural resources, neighborhood heritage, and unique natural areas.
3. Cultivate neighborhood interest, interaction, and involvement through creative celebrations, programs, promotions, and education.
4. Market neighborhood special events and destinations through local, City and regional organizations and resources.
5. Upgrade the image and appearance of all existing commercial and industrial areas, including major thoroughfares and public rights-of-way leading to, from, and through these areas.
6. Promote high standards of public and private property maintenance.

## ***Housing and Residential Areas***

**Goal:** *A well-cared for housing stock and living environment that offers satisfying choices to neighborhood residents, appeals to newcomers, and sustains the overall quality and character of the neighborhood.*

### ***Objectives:***

1. Maintain the primarily single-family character of the neighborhood.
2. Preserve sound existing housing through preventive maintenance and routine, consistent monitoring.
3. Promote the improvement, rehabilitation and potential redevelopment of older homes and deteriorating housing through active code enforcement and strategic community development initiatives.
4. Promote responsible property ownership, management, and tenancy to improve the quality, livability and condition of neighborhood rental housing.
5. Encourage the development of high quality single-family housing in undeveloped or under-developed areas of the neighborhood.
6. Reinforce and expand homeownership opportunities for the neighborhood's diverse population, including new construction of townhouses, condominiums, or senior housing that ranges in style and price.

7. Support activities and efforts that help neighbors to get to know one another, become involved and to build "neighbor-to-neighbor networks."
8. Protect residential areas from the encroachment of incompatible land uses and adverse impacts of adjacent activities.
9. Undertake public infrastructure improvements within residential areas as required.
10. Ensure new housing construction that complements and enhances existing neighborhood development.
11. Monitor non-residential uses within residential areas to ensure compatibility and encourage improvements or redevelopment as appropriate.

### **Commercial Areas**

*Goal: Vibrant, attractive commercial areas that provide residents with convenient, comparative options for goods and services and invite visitors to shop, dine, and enjoy.*

#### **Objectives:**

1. Advance the goals, objectives, and projects set forth in the City's 1999 *Economic Development Initiatives* for (i) revitalization of the Kennedy Avenue commercial district and the Briar East Shopping Center (169<sup>th</sup> Street/Grand Avenue) and (ii) accomplishing overall neighborhood and commercial area beautification.
2. Distinguish key roles, functions, and locations of the Kennedy Avenue and 169<sup>th</sup> Street/Grand Avenue commercial districts from the perspectives of businesses, customers, and the City.
3. Improve the range and mix of retail goods and services, dining, and cultural entertainment available in the neighborhood.
4. Upgrade the visual character of all commercial and mixed-use areas through public and private investment and partnership.
5. Re-focus strategies to encourage business and building owners to improve the condition and appeal of older commercial storefronts, buildings and sites.
6. Target opportunities for redevelopment of marginal, obsolete and vacant commercial properties.
7. Encourage the combination and consolidation of small commercial lots to improve opportunities for coordinated improvements and new developments.
8. Identify appropriate locations for mixed-use development within commercial areas.
9. Encourage the redevelopment of isolated or incompatible uses within commercial areas.
10. Identify features of commercial buildings, sites, and streetscapes that pose public safety concerns and remedy with improved design choices in lighting, landscaping, signage, parking, street furniture, traffic control/calming, etc.

11. Ensure convenient access to and adequate parking for all shopping areas.
12. Support the initiatives of local business and economic development organizations to excite interest in Hessville as a good location for shopping and locating or expanding a business.
13. Minimize the negative impact of commercial activities on neighboring land uses.

### **Industrial Areas**

***Goal:** Productive, well-maintained industrial areas that provide consistent local employment and business opportunities, contribute competitively to the City and regional economy, and complement other types of local development.*

#### **Objectives:**

1. Emphasize Hessville's strategic location and excellent regional accessibility as inducements for industrial property investment and development.
2. Stimulate the timely development of the undeveloped and under-developed industrial parcels south of the Borman Expressway.
3. Encourage the redevelopment or replacement of existing industrial parcels or sites that are vacant, under-developed or under-utilized.
4. Minimize the negative impact of industrial activities on neighboring land uses.
5. Support rehabilitation or redevelopment of obsolete or deteriorating industrial properties.
6. Monitor and enforce compliance with industrial performance standards for noise, air, odor, water, and other forms of environmental pollution.
7. Advance initiatives to clean up and redevelop "brownfield" industrial sites for new industrial uses or conversion to other uses, particularly north of Gibson Woods Nature Preserve.

### **Parks, Recreation, and Natural Areas**

***Goal:** A system of park, recreation and natural area resources that satisfies and encourages the recreation and leisure-time interests of residents and visitors.*

#### **Objectives:**

1. Continue to develop recreational facilities and programs that anticipate and respond to the contemporary, intergenerational desires of neighborhood residents.
2. Complete and implement the master plan for Dowling Park, including the development of an intergenerational community center.
3. Ensure that all park sites and recreational facilities are serviceable, accessible, secure, and well-maintained.
4. Expand existing park land and recreation facilities where possible.

5. Explore recreational and open space opportunities for under-utilized properties within residential areas.
6. Identify recreation opportunities north of Gibson Woods Nature Preserve that are compatible with Lake County initiatives for expanding environmental conservation areas.
7. Promote continued cooperation between the City, School City of Hammond, and local community organizations in the provision of recreational services.
8. Preserve and enhance natural areas and unique or endangered environmental resources to promote passive recreational and educational opportunities.
9. Link recreation sites, natural areas, key activity areas, and neighborhood destinations with bicycle trails, pedestrian paths and guiding signage, as appropriate.
10. Maintain a system of local park sites and recreational facilities that complement City and County recreational opportunities.

### ***Community Facilities and Utilities***

**Goal:** *A system of community facilities that provides for adequate, efficient and responsive public services and enhances the neighborhood as a desirable place to live and do business.*

#### ***Objectives:***

1. Maintain responsive and efficient levels of municipal services throughout the neighborhood.
2. Maintain adequate sites for fire and police departments, library, public works and other municipal facilities in the neighborhood; undertake upgrades, expansions, and replacement as necessary.
3. Ensure that all community facility sites and buildings are sound, attractively maintained and compatible with surrounding uses and development.
4. Expand facilities, services, and programs for youth—particularly teens—and senior citizens.
5. Cooperate with public and private schools to maintain quality neighborhood school sites and facilities.
6. Continue to emphasize the development of cultural and community facilities in combination with development of park facilities and programming as well as commercial area development locations.
7. Separate all remaining combined sanitary and storm sewers to alleviate the sewer discharge into the Little Calumet and Grand Calumet Rivers as well as sewage backups in residential basements.
8. Continue to provide an adequate water distribution system by providing necessary infrastructure improvements on a timely basis.

9. Enhance fire protection services in the community through the upgrade of all 4-inch and 6-inch water mains to 8-inch mains.

## **Environment**

**Goal:** *Improved and protected natural resource areas in order to achieve a balance in both vegetative and wildlife ecosystems as well as providing open space and recreational opportunities.*

### **Objectives:**

1. Support the flood control/recreation project of the Little Calumet River Basin Development Commission to enhance the recreational and environmental benefits of the Little Calumet River.
2. Promote the clean up of the Grand Calumet River.
3. Promote the preservation, maintenance and enhancement of natural areas, nature preserves, wetlands and other environmentally sensitive areas to provide habitat for birds and mammals and to provide for passive recreational and educational opportunities.
4. Support the Vision Plan of the 1998-2002 Lake County Parks and Recreation Open Space Master Plan Update for the protection of endangered lands and endangered species.
5. Support the protection and expansion of the Gibson Woods Nature Preserve as a significant resource for outdoor education programs, as a home for threatened and endangered species, and one of the few beach ridge and swale areas left in Indiana.
6. Promote the clean-up of hazardous sites for future development to support the tax base of Hammond.
7. Pursue preservation initiatives for environmentally sensitive areas that are not currently protected.

## **Transportation**

**Goal:** A balanced transportation system that provides for safe and efficient movement of vehicles and pedestrians, and reinforces and enhances established land development patterns within the neighborhood.

### **Objectives:**

1. Minimize non-local traffic within residential areas.
2. Work toward a solution to alleviate the interruption of traffic flow, traffic delays, and noise caused by the Norfolk and Southern Railroad's main trunk line that bisects the community.
3. Improve existing infrastructure, particularly those roadways with no curbs, gutters, or sidewalks, deteriorated pavement, and inadequate street lighting.
4. Upgrade major intersections that are focal points for major traffic generators.

5. Create a long-term (five- to ten-year) capital improvement program in order to provide a unified work program for the neighborhood.
6. Monitor potential congestion problems on 169<sup>th</sup> and 173<sup>rd</sup> Streets as shown in the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission Vision 2020 Plan.
7. Track the recommendations of the Gary/Chicago Airport Master Plan to determine potential noise and roadway impacts.
8. Ensure all major activity areas in the neighborhood are adequately supported by landscaped and appropriately lighted parking facilities.
9. Promote safe bicycle and pedestrian pathways throughout the neighborhood in a manner that serves both private and public activity areas.

**SECTION 3: Neighborhood-Wide Plan**

***Hessville Neighborhood Plan***  
*Hammond, Indiana*





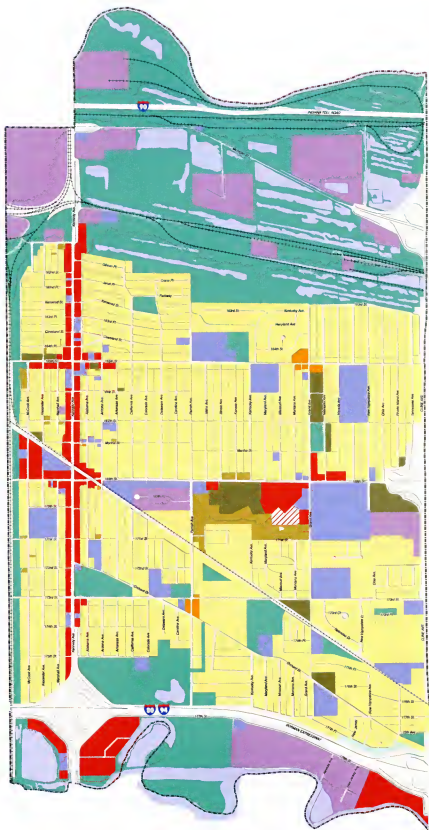
Figure 11

## Neighborhood-Wide Plan

**T**he Neighborhood-Wide Plan provides an overall framework for improvement and development within the Hessville neighborhood over the next 10- to 15-year period. It establishes long-range policies for key aspects of the neighborhood, consistent with the vision statement and community goals and objectives. The Plan strives to maintain and enhance the unique and distinguishing features of the community, improve and upgrade areas that are beginning to decline, and promote compatible new development and redevelopment in selected locations.

### Map Legend:

- Single-Family Residential
- Low-Density Multi-Family
- Medium-Density Multi-Family
- Commercial
- Mixed-Use: Neighborhood Commercial/Residential
- Transitional: Residential/Commercial
- Public/Semi-Public
- Parks/Open Space
- Industrial



## Hessville Neighborhood Plan • Hammond, Indiana

Prepared by Trkla, Pettigrew, Allen & Payne, Inc. • HNTB Corporation • July 2001



## **NEIGHBORHOOD-WIDE PLAN**

The *Neighborhood-Wide Plan* consists of three components: 1) land use, 2) transportation, and 3) community facilities. Recommendations for each Plan component are briefly highlighted in Figure 11, and more specific policies and recommendations are presented in the series of maps and text that follow.

The *Neighborhood-Wide Plan* is supplemented and refined by more detailed recommendations for designated subareas, (i) the Kennedy Avenue corridor; (ii) the 169<sup>th</sup> Street/Grand Avenue mixed-use area; (iii) the Area South of the Borman Expressway; and (iv) the Gibson Woods/Michigan Street Corridor that includes industrial properties and environmentally sensitive areas.

### **Land-Use**

The *Neighborhood-Wide Plan* provides a guide for future land-use and development within the Hessville neighborhood. It identifies which lands should be devoted to residential, commercial, industrial and public uses. It also describes how various land-use areas should be related and inter-connected, and highlights the types of projects and improvements to be undertaken within each area.

Because Hessville is a generally built-out neighborhood, the Plan builds upon the existing land-use structure to identify land-use and development opportunities for remaining vacant areas or strategic redevelopment areas. The Plan strives to reinforce and strengthen the stable and appealing existing residential character of the neighborhood. Single-family, low-density residential development should continue to predominate in a manner that complements and enhances surrounding residential homes. Public and private rehabilitation efforts to buildings and public streetscapes should be undertaken to improve older residential areas. Mixed-use retail and residential should be considered for under-developed or under-utilized small neighborhood commercial nodes at 165<sup>th</sup> Street/Grand Avenue and 173<sup>rd</sup> Street/Parrish Avenue. New medium-density multi-family residential should be considered for infill to replace older developments in poor condition or as part of the development concept for undeveloped areas roughly bounded by Parrish Avenue, 169<sup>th</sup> Street, Grand Avenue, and the rail tracks.

Commercial uses should be located primarily along the Kennedy Avenue commercial corridor, including the frontage of adjacent blocks of major intersecting streets and the areas directly south of the Borman Expressway interchange; the 169<sup>th</sup> Street/Grand Avenue shopping area, including the Briar East Shopping Center; and limitedly as part of neighborhood mixed-use nodes at 165<sup>th</sup> Street/Grand Avenue and 173<sup>rd</sup> Street/ Parrish Avenue. Existing commercial areas should be substantially improved and upgraded, and new investment and development should be aggressively promoted. Improvements should be made to existing buildings, parking lots and the public rights-of-way to address public safety as well as appearance goals. Several sites are recommended for development or redevelopment to anchor and enhance the potential for a more vibrant mix of retail and commercial uses. The scale of new development should match the identified role or function of each retail or commercial area.

Industrial uses should be limited to selected locations south of the Borman Expressway, the 169<sup>th</sup> Place Industrial Park, areas currently committed to industrial use in the northern portion of the neighborhood, and in the light industrial use area at Cline Avenue south of the 169<sup>th</sup> Street exit. Vacant industrial sites should be aggressively promoted for new development of primarily light industrial, hi-tech and warehouse businesses. Older, existing industrial properties that are obsolete and/or in deteriorating condition should be replaced or redeveloped for new uses based on compatibility with surrounding uses. Clean up of hazardous industrial sites should also be promoted to stimulate replacement development or redevelopment for new uses.

### ***Transportation***

Although Hessville's roadway system is essentially in place, operational improvements should be undertaken to meet the needs of future development and redevelopment and to improve and protect the integrity of existing neighborhoods.

The most critical transportation problem in the neighborhood is the interruption of traffic flow, traffic delays, and resulting public safety concerns related to railroad traffic and infrastructure. Short-term and long-term strategies for alleviating and reducing these impacts should continue to be pursued.

The safe and convenient use of transportation corridors by pedestrians, cyclists, public transit and private vehicles should be emphasized. Traffic flow and traffic safety should be improved along key routes through infrastructure and signalization improvements without disrupting or adversely impacting adjacent land development or overall neighborhood character.

Landscaping and other improvements should be undertaken to enhance the appearance of major roadways. Bicycle and pedestrian routes and amenities should be developed or added along major routes in the neighborhood leading to and from major activity areas and neighborhood focal points.

Impacts of master planning efforts for the Gary/Chicago Airport should be monitored and addressed as required to adjust for and minimize traffic, public transit, and other related impacts.

### ***Community Facilities***

The City should continue to offer its residents and businesses high quality community facilities and services.

The neighborhood's system of parks, recreation and natural areas should be maintained and enhanced as a critical community asset. Existing parks and recreation facilities should continue to be improved and upgraded as required, including the timely implementation of the Dowling Park master plan. Appearance enhancements and maintenance of all park and natural area sites should be emphasized and carried out. Opportunities to acquire vacant lots or strategic expansion parcels for adding or expanding parks or green space should be explored. Additional cooperative agreements should be established between the City, School City of Hammond, the County, and other organizations to enhance

recreational opportunities available to local residents as well as visitors to park and recreation resources that serve the broader Hammond community and region.

The City should cooperate with public and private schools to ensure that high quality educational facilities continue to be available. Existing school sites and buildings should be upgraded as required.

Other community facilities, including the branch library, fire stations, police substations, the YMCA-Hansen Branch, and public works facilities/infrastructure should be improved and enhanced as necessary, and should continue to be contemporary, responsive and serviceable assets of the neighborhood.

Other community-oriented facilities, sites, and resources including churches, fraternal organizations, social service providers, and community organizations should be promoted as important partners in building community interest, interaction, and identity. Architecturally and historically-significant resources of the built environment, as well as commemorative markers of historic sites and events, should continue to be promoted and emphasized.

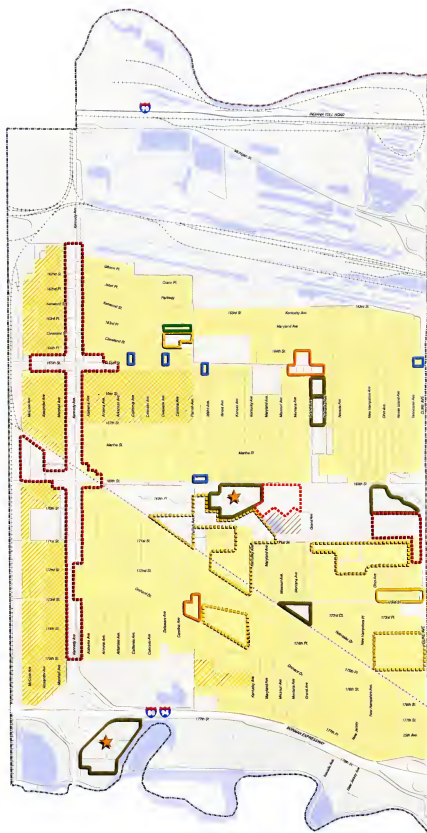
Figure 12

## Residential Areas

**T**he Hessville neighborhood is characterized by a steadfast stock of primarily single-family homes, but provides a range of other housing options. The Residential Area Policies strive to maintain and protect existing residential areas, improve and strengthen residential properties that are beginning to decline, and promote high quality new residential development that enhances existing neighborhood character.

### Map Legend:

- Single-family Neighborhoods should be protected from encroachment of non-residential uses. Housing rehabilitation, infill, and infrastructure improvements should be undertaken as required. 
- Single-family Improvement Areas should be improved with active code enforcement, technical/financial incentives, and private sector/neighbor-to-neighbor networks. 
- Single-family housing compatible with existing neighborhood characteristics and street patterns. 
- Planned Development of single-family housing to include new public infrastructure. 
- Multi-family Residential Developments to be improved through rehabilitation and site improvements or redevelopment for new uses. 
- Neighborhood Plan property to be discussed in more detail in "Subarea Plan" section. 
- Transitional: commercial/residential. 
- Minimize impacts of commercial and industrial uses on adjacent residential areas. 
- Monitor sites for improvement and potential redevelopment. 
- Neighborhood commercial nodes with potential for mixed-use development. 
- Preserve and highlight architectural, cultural, and historically significant housing. 



## **RESIDENTIAL AREAS**

Hessville's residential areas are recognized as one of the neighborhood's most important assets that sustain neighborhood quality and image. The neighborhood is composed primarily of single-family homes, but also includes a scattered amount of low-rise multi-family properties and developments—including apartments, condominiums and townhouses.

The neighborhood is composed of residential areas that are individually characterized by a variety of physical characteristics such as street configuration, lot sizes, and age, type, and cost of housing. The *Neighborhood-Wide Plan* emphasizes the preservation and maintenance of sound existing housing and residential areas, the rehabilitation of older homes and properties that are declining or in disrepair, and development of high quality new housing in vacant areas, infill locations or, as appropriate, in place of existing deteriorated housing properties.

### **Improvement Guidelines**

As depicted in Figure 12, several principles should guide residential area improvement and development within Hessville. All residential areas should be generally self-contained with convenient access to amenities that contribute to a comfortable living environment, including parks, recreation areas, schools, shopping areas, and community services.

Access to these neighborhood amenities should be convenient, safe and well-maintained for pedestrians, bicycles, and vehicles. In order to ensure ease of access and a sense of security, boundaries between residential areas and adjoining land uses should be clearly defined; screening and buffering of commercial, industrial and other uses should be provided as required; and through-traffic should continue to be routed around residential areas to local collector and local arterial streets.

Hessville should maintain a housing stock that offers choices to residents in style, type and price. While single-family detached homes should continue to predominate, limited new multi-family residential development should also be considered, particularly housing for senior citizens or owner-occupied developments for first-time homebuyers and/or "empty nesters."

New housing designed and priced to attract families and "step-up" buyers should be targeted for both infill and replacement housing in existing single-family areas as well as in the remaining undeveloped or under-developed residential locations in the neighborhood. All new residential development should be characterized by high quality design and construction and should be compatible with the scale and character of existing homes as appropriate.

In order to maintain the quality residential character of the neighborhood, residential areas should be strengthened through community facility and infrastructure improvements, including expanded park and recreational facilities, flood control, and improved street lighting, streets, sidewalks, curbs, and gutters, where necessary.

While most residential areas in Hessville are generally well-maintained and in sound condition, a number of properties are characterized by deferred maintenance and minor disrepair. Consistent and active code enforcement should be combined with financial incentives and/or technical assistance to leverage private resources and encourage property owners to attend to preventive and corrective maintenance.

Demonstration blocks for early attention and focused program efforts should be identified. "Neighbor-to-neighbor" networks should be facilitated and encouraged to improve (i) early warning communication with the City and between residents regarding problem locations or properties; (ii) neighborhood watch strategies; and (iii) sharing of resources, information, and skills for "do-it-yourself" maintenance and home improvement projects.

Improving the image and appearance of deteriorating multi-family developments should be a primary focus due to the relatively large negative visual impact that these properties have on the neighborhood and the number of residents living in these developments that are affected by reduced living conditions. Assisting both landlords and tenants in understanding rights, roles and responsibilities should be a companion strategy to financial incentives for improving the livability in rental housing.

In cases of more deteriorated properties, major housing rehabilitation (including "de-densification" strategies) or redevelopment of the property for new uses should be pursued. Efforts to enhance residents' access to homeownership resources should be cultivated, especially if rental housing units are replaced with new uses.

Maintaining the predominantly single-family home character of the neighborhood should be addressed by discouraging conversion of single-family homes to rental use—especially for two-family rental use. In addition to stemming additional conversions, incentives for restoring converted homes to full owner-occupied homeownership should be considered. Isolated commercial properties scattered throughout residential areas should also be improved, replaced or redeveloped as necessary to ensure the stability of residential areas.

Protecting, conserving or highlighting historically, culturally, or architecturally significant homes in historic districts or as individual sites scattered throughout the neighborhood is another important strategy for preserving the neighborhood's single-family home heritage. In particular, homes in the residential areas west of Parrish Avenue should be inventoried and evaluated for potential historical significance.

### ***New Residential***

While Hessville is essentially a built-out neighborhood, several opportunities for new residential development remain. There are some undeveloped or under-developed areas in the southeast quadrant of the neighborhood that allow for planned unit developments of several housing units as well as opportunities for single-family infill development.

Several isolated commercial parcels scattered throughout the neighborhood should be monitored for compatibility with surrounding residential uses and improved, replaced or redeveloped as appropriate. Due to chronic commercial vacancies, properties of the local shopping area at 165<sup>th</sup> Street/Grand Avenue might be more appropriately considered for mixed-use redevelopment that includes a residential and neighborhood commercial component.

Unfortunately, some vacant land in the neighborhood is inaccessible and isolated within the interior of blocks and is unlikely to be developed for residential use but should continue to serve a community open space function. Some "interior" vacant land without existing street access, however, could be developed and will require new public infrastructure that is compatible with the existing neighborhood setting and traffic circulation patterns. New construction of detached single-family housing that meets the contemporary desires of homebuyers regarding size, style, and amenities should be targeted for these areas in order for Hessville to remain competitive in the Hammond and northwest Indiana metropolitan region homebuyer market. Single-family detached infill or replacement housing of deteriorated properties throughout Hessville should complement and enhance the scale and character of surrounding housing.

Undeveloped and under-developed land zoned for multi-family use is located in the center of Hessville (roughly bounded by Parrish Avenue, Grand Avenue, 169<sup>th</sup> Street, and the railroad) adjacent to existing multi-family rental properties in need of improvement, single-family homes and a key shopping center location. In general, new single-family detached housing is appropriate for consideration in this area.

More detailed descriptions of these vacant areas are presented in the subarea section on 169<sup>th</sup> Street/Grand Avenue.





Figure 13

## Commercial and Industrial Areas

**T**he Commercial and Industrial Area Policies strive to strengthen and revitalize Hessville's commercial and industrial/employment areas. The Plan establishes policies for improving and upgrading existing commercial, industrial, and mixed-use areas, and aggressively pursuing new development or replacement of older deteriorating properties at key locations. Maintaining a vital commercial base as well as competitive industrial locations are important features of the Hessville.


### Map Legend:


Isolated commercial uses or land that should be considered for redevelopment consistent with surrounding uses. 


Neighborhood commercial nodes that should be monitored and considered for redevelopment consistent with surrounding uses, including residential or mixed-use where appropriate. 


Subareas which contain industrial and commercial uses are described in more detail in Section 4 of this Plan Report.


Revitalization of Kennedy Avenue Commercial Corridor 


169th Street/Grand Avenue Redevelopment Area to include improvement of Briar East Shopping Center as a commercial focal point for Hessville. 

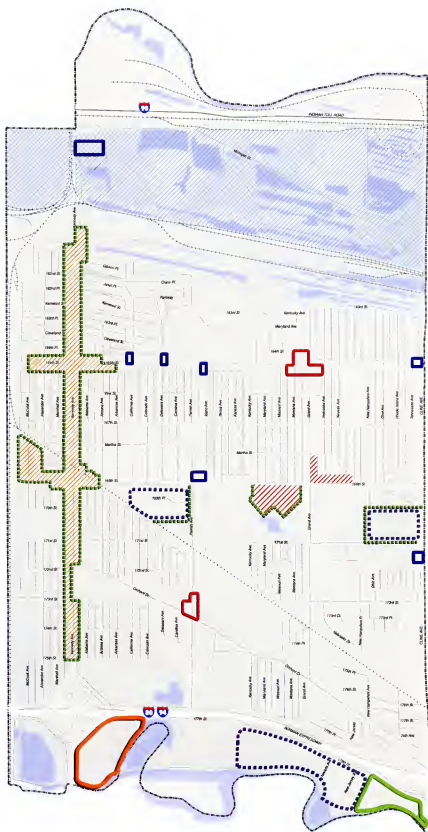
Development of vacant parcels and potential redevelopment of isolated residential for commercial. 

Industrial Improvement Areas with opportunities for new development of vacant land or replacement of older marginal industrial uses. 

Improvement Area for improving buildings and sites of existing uses; environmental remediation; protecting environmentally sensitive resources; and consideration of vacant land for new uses. 

Buffering and screening of commercial and industrial uses from adjacent residential uses. 

Commercial Improvement Area for new development and rehabilitation. 



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## **COMMERCIAL and INDUSTRIAL AREAS**

### ***Existing Commercial Areas***

Existing retail, service and office uses in Hessville are located primarily (i) along the Kennedy Avenue commercial corridor that runs the length of the neighborhood and includes commercial uses along adjacent blocks of intersecting streets and (ii) the commercial shopping area centered at 169<sup>th</sup> Street/Grand Avenue which includes the Briar East shopping center. Other commercial areas include small neighborhood commercial nodes at the intersections of 165<sup>th</sup> Street/Grand Avenue and 173<sup>rd</sup> Street/Parrish Avenue, respectively, and several individual commercial uses scattered throughout the neighborhood. In combination, Hessville's commercial areas contain a diverse mix of businesses that serve adjacent residential areas, Hammond as a whole, auto traffic passing through the community, and visitors from the region.

### ***Commercial Improvement Guidelines***

Both the Kennedy Avenue commercial corridor and the Briar East Shopping Center are identified in the City of Hammond's 1999 *Economic Development Initiatives* as focus areas for the City's overall retail initiative. Consistent with the City's retail initiative, Hessville's existing commercial areas should be substantially improved and upgraded in the future. Viable existing businesses should be improved and enhanced, while at the same time new commercial uses—particularly retail, convenience commercial, dining, cultural, and entertainment—should be aggressively promoted to expand the mix of locally available goods and services. Commercial uses should continue to be limited to arterials and existing commercial nodes and alternative land-uses, possibly including new mixed-use development or community facilities, should also be considered to complement and reinforce primary commercial areas or to phase out isolated commercial uses in residential areas.

New commercial development should be of a size and scale compatible with the established character of the neighborhood and the defined function of the commercial area. New commercial construction should be limited to two or three stories. Commercial developments should be characterized by the highest possible standards of design and construction. Landscaping, lighting, signage, material choices, and site design standards should reflect contemporary standards for streetscape design and pedestrian safety—standards which should be incorporated into any official review process for commercial development.

Since commercial areas are located along major traffic routes, access to commercial properties should be carefully controlled to minimize conflicts with through traffic movements. The consolidation of access drives for adjacent properties should be encouraged. Adequate off-street parking and loading facilities should be provided within all commercial areas. The consolidation of parking and loading facilities for two or more businesses should be encouraged. Expanded parking areas behind commercial uses should be considered with adequate screening from and minimal impacts on adjacent

residential uses. Parking lots and service areas should be attractively screened and landscaped (internal and perimeter), particularly along major streets.

The image and appearance of commercial areas should be upgraded. Projects should be undertaken to improve the appearance of the public rights-of-way within commercial areas, including landscaping, lighting, signage, sidewalks, crosswalks, streetscape furniture and pedestrian amenities.

Commercial areas should not adversely impact adjacent residential areas. Firm boundaries should be established for the commercial areas. Screening and buffering should be promoted, including landscaping and decorative fencing where possible. Commercial traffic and parking should not spill over into residential areas if possible. Noise, safety and maintenance should be carefully monitored within commercial areas.

Generalized land-use recommendations for the neighborhood's commercial areas are highlighted below. More detailed recommendations will be included in the Neighborhood subarea plans in Section 4 of the *Neighborhood Plan*.

- **Kennedy Avenue** should continue to accommodate a mix of retail and commercial activities that provide convenience to both pedestrians and auto-users as appropriate. Opportunities for enhancing or constructing mixed-use developments should also be identified. The redevelopment and replacement of older, vacant obsolete commercial properties should be promoted as well as public improvements to the commercial district streetscape. Functional sub-areas of the Kennedy corridor should be defined and corresponding improvement strategies outlined to take advantage of existing and potential strengths and minimize weaknesses. For example, the pedestrian-oriented nature of the corridor between 169<sup>th</sup> and 165<sup>th</sup> Streets should be highlighted and enhanced to reinforce the sense of a neighborhood town center and community focal point; in contrast, the corridor's southern entryway from the Borman Expressway interchange should be promoted as a highly convenient, auto-oriented, regional commercial service area that has been enhanced by the recent development of the Lake County Interstate Visitors Information Center and new hotels.
- The **169<sup>th</sup> Street/Grand Avenue** shopping area should be improved based on an anchor concept for the revitalization and potential redevelopment of the **Briar East Shopping Center**. The revitalization concept should include replacement of deteriorating buildings, development of outlots for new uses, significant visual upgrades to facades and signage, re-direction of traffic circulation, re-configuration of parking, and significant improvements to parking, lighting, landscaping and other site amenities.
- The neighborhood shopping area at **165<sup>th</sup> Street/Grand Avenue**, the **commercial node at 173<sup>rd</sup> Street/Parrish Avenue**, as well as individual **scattered commercial sites** throughout the neighborhood, should be improved as consistent with commercial area policies or considered for redevelopment to mixed-uses or other uses compatible with surrounding land-uses.

These commercial area policies are generally depicted in Figure 13.

## ***Existing Industrial Areas***

Due to excellent regional accessibility, Hessville has several important industrial locations that constitute opportunities and some challenges. The Kennedy Industrial Park located south of the Borman Expressway includes several industrial businesses. The newly developed and developing Krosan Interstate Business Park south of the Borman Expressway has attracted new businesses and has land for more development. The 169<sup>th</sup> Place Industrial Park is a small, built-out self-contained area in the heart of the neighborhood anchored by a United Parcel Service facility, but contains vacant property and is adjacent to significant vacant land. The area north of Gibson Woods Nature Preserve is an older heavy industrial area that contains several tank farms, Resco Products, Halstab Industries, AGA Gas and several vacant parcels, but is characterized by a number of environmental issues, sensitivities and concerns that require balanced and compatible development strategies. Finally, the area at Cline Avenue, just north of Oak Crest Lane, contains a few businesses that are commercial service/light industrial in nature and vacant land which could be appropriate for redevelopment to new uses, including single-family residential. With the exception of the 169<sup>th</sup> Place Industrial Park and a couple of isolated industrial businesses, industrial uses are remotely situated from residential areas.

## ***Industrial Improvement Guidelines***

Industrial uses in Hessville should be limited to areas where they already exist, especially since vacant parcels remain in established industrial park settings. The primary strategies should be to upgrade and enhance buildings and sites, retain and “retool” viable existing businesses, develop new industrial businesses on vacant land, and replace older, marginal industrial facilities.

In general, new light industrial and warehouse operations are appropriate to the neighborhood with buildings constructed in a manner that enhances the character of the industrial area and does not adversely impact adjacent land-uses. New developments which consolidate office, warehousing and parking facilities for multiple industrial and business operations should be encouraged. Loading and service areas should be located behind buildings; at a minimum they should be positioned away from front entrances and major streets.

Safe and convenient access should be provided to industrial properties for trucks and autos. Major roadways serving industrial areas should be serviceable and well-maintained. If industrial areas link to other uses or activity areas, sidewalks should be included within, to and from industrial areas. Entrances to industrial areas should be designated with distinctive entryway and guiding signage as well as accent lighting and landscaping.

New industrial construction should be compatible with and enhance the surrounding building context. Architectural treatments and landscaping should be promoted to add visual interest to industrial buildings located along major streets or other highly visible locations. Fronts of buildings should be attractively and appropriately landscaped. Screening and buffering should be provided between industrial areas and nearby land-uses—particularly residential uses. Decorative fencing and landscaping should be promoted at the periphery of industrial sites and to screen parking, loading and service

areas, and outdoor storage yards, particularly for industrial sites that have high visibility or border residential areas. Chain link fencing should be discouraged and allowed only in areas not visible to the public.

These industrial area policies are generally depicted in Figure 13.

Figure 14

## Transportation

**P**olicies and projects for improving Hessville's transportation system are highlighted in this figure. Areas of concern include at-grade railroad crossings, streets lacking curbs, gutters, and sidewalks, intersections needing improvement, future congestion on streets, and the potential impacts of the proposed expansion of the Gary/Chicago Airport. The information is based on field visits undertaken by the Consultant and from the City of Hammond.

### Map Legend:

Street in need of Improvement  
(based on visual survey)

Street Projects - 2001/2002 Construction

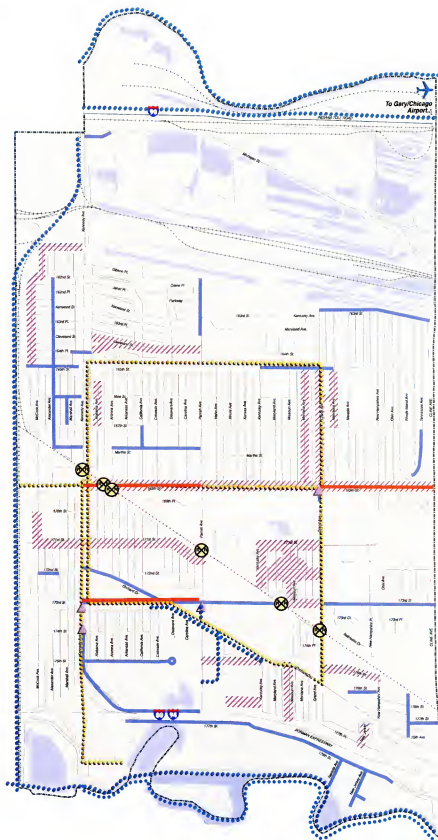
At-Grade Railroad Crossing

Future Congestion  
(Projection for Year 2020)

Intersection in Need  
of Improvement

Proposed Pedestrian Greenway,  
Bicycle, or Recreational Trail Opportunity

Public Transportation Route



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## **TRANSPORTATION**

### ***At-Grade Rail Crossings***

The most critical transportation problem in the neighborhood has been the interruption to traffic flow, the traffic delays, the public safety concerns and the physical fragmentation of the neighborhood caused by the numerous at-grade railroad crossings and the forty or so slow moving trains a day that bisect the neighborhood. The Norfolk and Southern (N&S) Railway main trunk line crosses on a diagonal through the center of the neighborhood. Signal problems and train traffic at the yard west of the center of the neighborhood have caused trains to stop and block intersections for long periods of time. Often N&S trains need to stop and wait for north-south cross traffic from the east-west IHB Railroad tracks, blocking crossings. Problems caused by freight traffic are often difficult to solve since they involve several railroads.

The City of Hammond and the railroads have been working together on viable solutions to this problem. The N&S Railroad recently installed a new signal system in a yard facility west of the Hessville neighborhood to alleviate cross track interference with the east-west IHB Railroad, resulting in fewer stopped trains. Additional solutions to reducing the number of trains bisecting the neighborhood are being sought, but may or may not be feasible. Rerouting some of the trains onto the IHB/Conrail Porter Branch Line tracks, located north of the Gibson Woods Nature Preserve, has been suggested. However, the N&S Railroad has not agreed to this solution and whether or not this is feasible has not been determined. Several of the 27 trains a day traveling on the N&S tracks service industry and businesses along the line and could not be rerouted.

A planned upgrade to the traffic signal system for 2002 will track the location of freight trains in Hammond and will direct emergency vehicles to improve the response time.

Another solution to alleviate the traffic problems near at-grade crossings is the construction of an overpass or underpass. Assuming a minimum 25-foot vertical clearance and a maximum 4% longitudinal slope for an overpass, the horizontal clearance requirements for an overpass would be a minimum of 700 feet on either side of the track. The required roadway and structural geometry, retaining walls, and the purchase of right-of-way complicate the viability of this approach. A grade-separated crossing could further fragment adjacent residential and commercial areas, and would create an additional barrier within the community. The City could pursue an appropriate location outside Hessville that could alleviate some of the traffic problems within the neighborhood.

### ***Infrastructure***

A visual survey indicated deficiencies in the infrastructure system of several streets in the neighborhood including streets lacking curbs, gutters, and sidewalks and streets with poor pavement. Residents have also reported that there is insufficient lighting on some streets. Streets in need of repair include 169th Street, sections of 173rd Street and several local streets in need of improvement and streets scheduled for improvements to be constructed in 2001 or 2002 are represented in Figure 14. In addition, the intersection of Grand Avenue and 169th Street needs upgrading to handle traffic flows caused by

numerous traffic generators in the area. In order to determine which streets have insufficient lighting, a lighting survey with photometric measurement should be conducted.

Future capital improvements, including those for Hessville, are not publicized beyond the year 2002. It is recommended that the City implement a longer (5 to 10 year) Capital Improvement Program in order to provide a unified work program for the neighborhood showing future improvement efforts for all infrastructure.

The Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC) Vision 2020 plan states that two sections of 169th Street and one section of 173rd Street have the potential for future congestion problems. Contributing factors include "tie-ups" due to turning movements at intersections and driveways, and traffic signal timing.

As stated previously, Hammond is in the process of upgrading the traffic signal system throughout the City. The signals will be interconnected and monitored from a central location. Traffic volumes at each signalized intersection can then be analyzed to determine if the timing of the signal is accurate. The new system is currently under design; installation will occur in 2002. The upgraded signal system will help alleviate potential future problems along the three sections of roads cited in the NIRPC Vision 2020 plan mentioned above. Turning movements along 169th and 173rd Streets should be continually monitored as a preventive measure to alleviate future congestion problems.

Hessville is currently served by several public transit bus routes as indicated on Figure 14. Efforts to coordinate and enhance local and regional service should continue.

### ***Gary/Chicago Airport***

The final draft of the Gary/Chicago Airport Master Plan presents three development scenarios.

The first scenario (or "base-case") set of recommendations spans a twenty-year timeframe and includes the extension of existing Runway 1230 by 1900 feet to the northwest and the construction of a new terminal building with sixteen gates. Although flight patterns would not change, the extension of Runway 1230 would allow for larger aircraft, resulting in an increase in noise for those residential properties in the flight path.

The second scenario (or "mid-case") includes expansion of the new terminal, and the extension and widening of the existing crosswind runway to allow for commercial aircraft. The third scenario (or "high case") includes potential expansion of the terminal to up to 30 gates and a new parallel runway north of Runway 1230.

As a component of the new terminal, Cline Avenue would be relocated to the west in the first scenario. In the third scenario, Industrial Avenue would be closed; truck traffic utilizing this road would need to travel along Cline Avenue to access the Tollway. Bus and rail transit facilities to serve the airport should also be incorporated into the airport planning efforts.

Hessville residents should remain aware of the potential long-range changes that may occur with the airport and the impacts on surrounding roadways in the community.



## Community Facilities & Character

**Map Legend:**

- ## Hessville Neighborhood Plan • Hammond, Indiana



## ***COMMUNITY FACILITIES and NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER***

### ***Improvement Guidelines***

In general, all community facilities should be well-maintained to ensure serviceability, safety, and appeal. The City should be attuned to the contemporary, intergenerational needs and interests of local residents to upgrade, replace, or add facilities and sites as needed. Needs and desires of businesses should be addressed to maintain Hessville as a competitive location for maintaining, expanding, or locating a business. As necessary, screening and buffering improvements between land-uses and activities should be carefully considered and implemented. The City should continue to promote cooperation and interaction among various public and private agencies and organizations providing facilities and services to the community, including Lake County, School City of Hammond, local organizations and neighboring communities. These guidelines are generally represented in Figure 15.

### ***Parks, Recreation and Natural Areas***

The Hessville neighborhood enjoys a range of park, recreation and natural area sites and facilities that serve a combination of neighborhood, City, and regional functions.

The Hammond Parks Department owns and operates six City parks throughout the neighborhood and the Lake County Parks and Recreation Department owns and operates the substantial Gibson Woods Nature Preserve that spans across the northern part of the neighborhood. In addition, two sites are independently operated as baseball and softball fields. Finally, significant recreation and open space facilities are provided as part of the campuses of seven school sites operated by School City of Hammond. Continued cooperation, agreements and creative partnerships among these various entities should be promoted to maximize the potential of existing sites and facilities.

All park, recreation and natural areas should be well-maintained and older facilities should be replaced or reprogrammed for new recreation uses. Recreational program offerings should be expanded, particularly for teens and senior citizens. Sites should be attractively landscaped and landscaping should be maintained and revitalized as required. Where possible, new park space should be acquired or existing space expanded. New recreational or open space opportunities near the Little Calumet River as well as north of Gibson Woods Nature Preserve should be explored. Several vacant lots or areas zoned for single-family residential could be retained as public open spaces or community gardens—depending upon ownership, development interest, and immediate neighborhood needs and desires.

Dowling Park, Hessville Park, Carlson Oxbow Park and Gibson Woods Nature Preserve and other natural areas should continue to be promoted as unique neighborhood assets with appeal to residents and visitors alike. Where possible, these parks should maintain linkages to the neighborhood's system of community focal points and activity areas by safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle paths.

A significant initiative of the Hammond Parks Department is a new master plan for Dowling Park. Suggested features of the Dowling Park Plan include comprehensive site and facility improvements, the development of an intergenerational community center, and expansion of the Park to the east and/or west. The Plan should also minimize impacts of park activity on neighboring single-family residential areas, promote the park as a key neighborhood feature, and ensure good linkage and accessibility to and from the park for pedestrians, bicycles and vehicles.

Another important initiative of the Hammond Parks Department is the development of a fresh air skate park. The location of such a park could be sited within an existing park or perhaps in a new park location. Other major initiatives include the expansion of Carlson Oxbow Park, "bike and hike" trail development and opportunities for development along the Little Calumet River.

As part of a five-year "Vision Plan for 1998-2002", Lake County Parks and Recreation Department identifies nearby sites for Gibson Woods expansion or partnerships to enhance the regional "natural resource corridor" through additional green space, resource recovery, reforestation and prairie reclamation and restoration. Environmentally sensitive sites or opportunity areas include nearby Seidner Dune and Swale area, the Grand Calumet River Tern Site, and the Shell property in Hessville, as well as the 298-acre Dupont Tract wetland complex in East Chicago. The County Vision Plan also calls for renovation of the Gibson Woods Nature Preserve's educational Awareness Center for larger classroom areas, a bird observatory room and improved display exhibit areas. Additional concerns for this area are described in Figure 16, Environmental Areas.

### ***Public Schools***

School City of Hammond operates four elementary schools, a middle school and a high school within the boundaries of Hessville. While the trend in enrollment has declined over the past several years, each school is at or near capacity with an overall enrollment of approximately 3300 students (ranges from 300-600 at elementary schools, approximately 700 students at the middle school, and approximately 900 students at the high school). School City of Hammond also maintains the Miller School Building for temporary classrooms to accommodate students of schools throughout Hammond that are being renovated or rebuilt.

Aside from Morton Elementary School, all schools share several common physical conditions that require periodic improvements and more extensive remodeling in the near future. In addition, although school locations are regarded as good, school sites are considered generally inadequate for parking and potential expansion needs.

Long-range planning for the School City of Hammond system emphasizes the need for delivery of high-speed access to the Internet for each household. According to School City, opportunities for installation of carrier infrastructure for fiber optic cables should be identified and implemented when streets and sidewalks are installed or resurfaced. Other considerations for school sites involve minimizing impacts of adjacent uses, especially regarding traffic generation and circulation.

Public works facilities and policies for water distribution and sanitary and storm water are described in detail in Figure 17.

The U.S. Post Office is a key customer traffic generator located on Kennedy Avenue. The Post Office site, location, parking and building are in good condition and provide adequate neighborhood access to postal services.

### ***Community Organizations***

The Hessville Neighborhood is home to many community organizations and churches that provide services and facilities that complement and supplement those provided by the City and other governmental entities. In general, these organizations enhance community-building activities by providing social gathering places and education, recreation, and a variety of social services. Some churches have recently been built, expanded or improved, adding focal points of architectural or historic interest to the neighborhood. The Hammond YMCA recently reopened the former Hansen Branch Library as a community center (YMCA-Hansen Branch) with a variety of youth, family and adult programs. The YMCA site, however, requires additional improvements to complete the transition of the site to its new use. Fraternal and union organizations also maintain a number of sites and facilities in the neighborhood that serve residents, bring visitors to the neighborhood, and provide key gathering places for community interaction and activity.

In combination, community organizations contribute to the physical identity as well as the social fabric of the community. Partnerships and cooperation between community organizations and governmental entities should be promoted and enhanced through creative, efficient, and effective sharing of resources and energies.

### ***Neighborhood Character and Promotion***

The community facilities and destination areas of Hessville are considered among the neighborhood's most important assets sustaining commitment and pride from current residents and businesses and inviting interest from visitors and newcomers. Community facilities, along with the celebrations, events, programs and resources that they house, should be creatively promoted through neighborhood, City, and regional resources as appropriate. Visitors and residents should be welcomed and guided to focal points, key activity areas, and destination spots of the neighborhood by safe pathways for pedestrians, bicycles, and/or vehicles. The appearance and image of corridors and major routes leading to and from these locations should be improved with infrastructure, landscaping and lighting upgrades as well as entryway, guiding and identity features (landscaping, lighting, public art, etc.) at key intersections and locations.

A unique opportunity for promoting Hessville and Hammond is the Lake County Interstate Visitors Information Center that opened in 1999. The architecturally distinctive Center located at the Kennedy Avenue interchange of the Borman Expressway provides an array of visitor and rest stop facilities and features promoting tourism and economic development in Lake County.

Creative promotions for drawing visitors, shoppers, and potential businesses and residents to Hessville—the southeastern gateway to Hammond—should be outlined and pursued. Adjacent or nearby parcels that are vacant or in deteriorated condition should be redeveloped with uses that complement and reinforce this cluster of regionally-oriented uses.

Figure 16

## Environmental Concerns

**T**he Hessville Neighborhood has prominent natural features that enhance the beauty and desirability of the area. These natural areas include the Little Calumet and Grand Calumet Rivers, the Gibson Woods Nature Preserve, the Grand Calumet River Tern Site, the Dupont Tract, the Seidner Dune and Swale State Nature Preserve, the Shirley Heinze Conservation Easement, the Tolleston Ridges Site, and the Cline Avenue Nature Preserve. High quality natural communities as well as bird, reptile, mammal, amphibian, and insects exist in these areas. The preservation and enhancement of these open spaces will meet the desired goal of achieving a balance in both vegetative and wildlife ecosystems.

### Map Legend:

Floodplain

Wetlands

Potential Hazard Sites

Levees/Floodwalls

Gibson Woods Nature Preserve

Grand Calumet River Tern Site

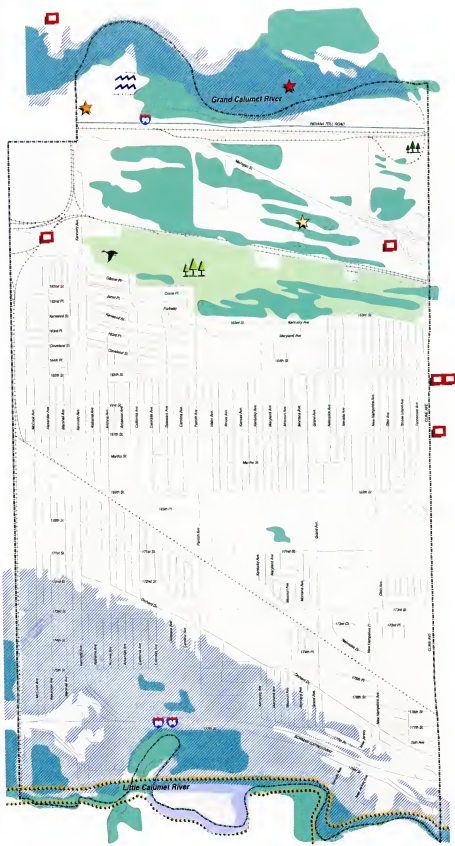
Dupont Tract

Tolleston Ridges Site

Cline Avenue Nature Preserve

Shirley Heinze Conservation Easement

Seidner Dune and Swale State Nature Preserve



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## **ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS**

### ***Natural Areas, Nature Preserves and Wetlands***

The Little Calumet River and the Grand Calumet River are significant natural resources bordering the Hessville neighborhood. Both rivers are greatly under-utilized as a recreational resource. Wetland communities are present in close proximity to both rivers.

The Little Calumet River Flood Control and Recreation project is a federally authorized construction project sponsored by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Little Calumet River Basin Development Commission. The project began in December 1990. When completed, most of the City will be removed from the floodplain definition, a 200-year level of flood protection will be established, and recreation features along the main branch of the Little Calumet River from the Illinois/Indiana State Line to I-65 in Gary, Indiana will be provided. The project scope includes the construction of new levees and floodwalls, construction of 16.8 miles of hiking trails, picnic areas, canoe launch areas, fishing piers, and a passive nature study area. The benefits of the project include the protection of numerous areas from future flooding and enhanced recreation areas. Marginal land along the Borman Expressway corridor subject to constant flooding can be reclaimed for economic and redevelopment uses. Improvements to the portion of the river located within Hessville are considered to be in "stage six" of an eight-stage construction process. The construction completion is scheduled for 2006. Once completed, the Little Calumet River will be an improved recreational asset for residents of Hessville.

The Grand Calumet River is a heavily polluted river that transcends through an industrial corridor. It is difficult to access due to the privately held industrial property surrounding the river. There are two natural areas in the Grand Calumet River area. Both sites are a component of the Vision Plan of the 1998-2002 Lake County Parks and Recreation Open Space Master Plan Update. The Vision Plan identifies sites that will expand the Lake County Parks and Recreation Department's (LCPRD) holdings and sites that could provide for potential partnerships with other agencies for management of open space and recreational lands.

The "Grand Calumet River Tern Site" is located on property owned by the South Shore Railroad; the site has been donated to the Isaac Walton League. North of the tracks the property is deep marsh. South of the tracks, there are sand-savanna ridges. In 1990 this property was the site of an EPA wetlands mitigation project.

The "Dupont Tract" is a 298-acre wetland complex that lies within a bend of the Grand Calumet River. There is a remnant dune and swale community that has experienced some disturbance. Ponds and wetlands located closest to the river provide habitat for migrating and resident waterfowl, wading birds, songbirds, and mammals such as muskrat and raccoon.

South of the Grand Calumet River is the Gibson Woods Nature Preserve. The Gibson Woods Nature Preserve is a managed nature preserve of approximately 179 acres. Gibson Woods is owned by Lake LCPRD and is an important environmental and educational center.

By including the Grand Calumet River Tern Site, the Dupont Tract site and the Gibson Woods Nature Preserve sites in the Lake County Park and Recreation Vision Plan, the sites would remain protected and provide needed open space for passive recreational and educational opportunities for future generations. By supporting these efforts, the residents of Hessville would continue to benefit from the significant natural resources and open space within their community. More detail for the environmental and natural areas is included in the subarea section for the Gibson Woods/Michigan Street Corridor.

### ***Threatened and Endangered Species***

The Indiana Department of Natural Resources' database on "endangered, threatened and rare species" lists several high quality natural communities as well as bird, reptile, mammal, amphibian, and insects within or around the Hessville community. Many of these species are found in the Gibson Woods Nature Preserve and the Grand Calumet River Tern Site. In addition, species are found at the Cline Avenue Nature Preserve, located near the Interstate 90 and Cline Avenue interchange and at the Tolleston Ridges Site located within Gibson Woods Nature Preserve. By continuing to preserve, manage, and enhance the open spaces within the community, the goal of achieving the balance in both vegetative and wildlife ecosystems will be met.

### ***Hazardous Sites***

Of concern are the many contaminated areas within Hessville's boundaries. The areas within Hessville include the Indiana Harbor Belt Railroad transport site, the former Hammond dump site, a transport and disposal site for hazardous waste near Michigan Street and Cline Avenue and the U.S. Smelter and Lead Refinery site located north of the Grand Calumet River. Significant clean up efforts would be warranted for each site. A concerted effort to apply for funding to clean up these areas for the future development of these sites to support the tax base of Hammond should be an ongoing objective.



Figure 17

## Public Utilities

**F**igure 17 provides an overview of existing public utilities serving the Hessville Neighborhood, including the water, storm and combined sewer systems. By separating all combined sewers, discharges during heavy rainfall to both the Little Calumet and Grand Calumet Rivers, as well as sewer backups in basements, should be alleviated.

### Map Legend:

#### Sewers (48"+diameter)

Combined

Storm

Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO)

Force Main

#### Water Mains (12"+diameter)

Basement Flood Complaints

Surface Flood Complaints

Pumping Station



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## **PUBLIC UTILITIES**

### ***Sanitary and Storm Sewer System***

Basement and street flooding are problematic for some areas of Hessville due to the reliance on combined sanitary and storm sewers. The neighborhood north of 169<sup>th</sup> Street is served primarily by combined sewers. All storm and wastewater flows reach the Kennedy North pump station located at Kennedy Avenue and Michigan Street. During heavy rainfall events, when flow to the North pump stations exceeds capacity of the sanitary pumps, wet weather flows mixed with sanitary sewage are dumped into the Grand Calumet River. A similar occurrence happens in the neighborhood south of 169<sup>th</sup> Street. Although this area is served primarily by separate sanitary and storm sewer systems, there are a few remaining combined sewers. All wastewater from this area flows to the South pump station located at the Kennedy-Borman interchange. During heavy rainfalls when the pump station reaches capacity, the storm runoff and sanitary sewage is discharged directly to the Little Calumet River. Downstream capacity restrictions for the combined sewer systems also contribute to sewer backups in residential basements.

There are two sewer separation projects currently under design to alleviate the most problematic areas of Hessville. A separation plan is currently being developed for the area south of 169<sup>th</sup> Street and for the area along Alexander and McCook Avenues, between 165<sup>th</sup> and 169<sup>th</sup> Streets. The City should continue to design and program funding to separate all combined sewers in the Hessville area. By doing so, discharges during heavy rainfall to both rivers as well as sewer backups in basements should be alleviated.

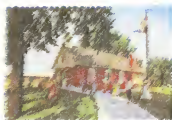
### ***Water Distribution System***

The water distribution system in Hessville is well looped in order to maintain satisfactory service. The backbone of the network is made up of interconnected mains varying in sizes between 12- and 36-inches in diameter. Individual service mains within the neighborhood are typically 6-inches in diameter; however, a few 4- and 8-inch mains are also present.

As the City continues to replace infrastructure, it should be an objective to replace all 4-inch mains and 6-inch mains with 8-inch mains in order to enhance fire protection services for all areas of Hammond.

**SECTION 4: Subarea Plans**

***Hessville Neighborhood Plan***  
*Hammond, Indiana*



## *Subarea Plans*

### **INTRODUCTION**

This report presents improvement and development recommendations for four designated "subareas" within the Hessville Neighborhood: 1) the Kennedy Avenue corridor; 2) the 169<sup>th</sup> Street/Grand Avenue area; 3) the Area South of the Borman Expressway; and 4) Gibson Woods/Michigan Street Corridor.

The Subarea Plans focus on: a) the role and function of each area; b) land-use, development and redevelopment; c) traffic circulation and parking; and d) appearance and character.

The Subarea Plans build upon the generalized guidelines established for the neighborhood as a whole in Sections 2 and 3 of this *Plan*, and provide more detailed and site-specific recommendations for these important parts of the Hessville Neighborhood.

### **IDENTIFICATION of the SUBAREAS**

The four subareas were selected for several reasons. The four subareas contain a diverse range of land-uses and include some of the most intensely developed portions of the neighborhood. The four subareas also include important transportation facilities that connect destinations within Hammond and the surrounding region. The four subareas are highly visible to passing motorists, and are primary determinants in how the neighborhood is perceived by residents and visitors alike. Finally, each subarea has vacant and/or under-utilized properties that may be subject to development or redevelopment in the future.

The four subareas include:

1. **Kennedy Avenue**, which encompasses the properties along the east and west sides of Kennedy Avenue as it passes through the neighborhood. Kennedy Avenue is a major north-south arterial that connects Hessville with nearby neighborhoods, communities and the regional highway system. It is also an intensely developed land-use corridor providing sites for a wide range of retail, service, public and institutional uses that serve the neighborhood and the surrounding region.
2. **169<sup>th</sup> Street/Grand Avenue**, which encompasses the Briar East Shopping Center and other properties near the intersection of 169<sup>th</sup> Street and Grand Avenue. This area, which is located near the geographic heart of Hessville, has potential for area-wide improvement, revitalization and redevelopment as a neighborhood-oriented shopping and service focal point.
3. **South of the Borman Expressway**, which encompasses the lands along the southern edge of the neighborhood. This area contains a mix of commercial, industrial, residential and open space uses, and has experienced significant new investment and

development in recent years. It also has several vacant and under-utilized properties that may have potential for development or redevelopment in the future.

4. ***Gibson Woods/Michigan Street Corridor***, which encompasses the industrial properties and open lands in the northern portion of the neighborhood. While this area does contain several heavy industrial uses, it is less intensely developed than the other three subareas. Although it has limited accessibility and is characterized by environmental concerns, this area may have potential for new industrial, recreational and open space development in the future.

### ***ORGANIZATION of the REPORT***

Each of the four subareas is discussed on the following pages. Each subarea subsection includes the following:

- A review of planning influences, including existing land-use, building conditions, zoning, access and circulation, parking, and appearance and character;
- A listing of recommended improvement and development guidelines related to land-use, sites and buildings, transportation, parking, and appearance and character;
- A discussion of potential improvement and development sites; and
- Full-color illustrations summarizing planning influences and plan recommendations.

## *Subarea 1:*

### **KENNEDY AVENUE**

Subarea 1 encompasses the frontage properties along the east and west sides of Kennedy Avenue, generally between 161<sup>st</sup> Street on the north and Interstate 80/94 (the Borman Expressway) on the south. This subarea also encompasses the commercial properties just east and west of Kennedy Avenue along both 165<sup>th</sup> and 169<sup>th</sup> Streets. *(The portion of Kennedy Avenue south of the Borman Expressway is covered in the plan for Subarea 3.)*

Kennedy Avenue is a major north-south arterial street that connects Hessville to nearby neighborhoods, communities and the regional highway system. It is also an intensely developed land-use corridor providing sites for a wide range of retail, office and service uses.

While the Kennedy Avenue corridor is fully developed and several improvements and developments have been undertaken in recent years, much could be done to further upgrade and revitalize this important mixed-use corridor in the future.

#### **PLANNING INFLUENCES**

Several factors will influence opportunities for improvement and development along Kennedy Avenue. Planning influences, highlighted in Figure 18, include: a) existing land-use, b) sites and buildings, c) current zoning, d) access and circulation, e) parking, and f) appearance and character.

- **Existing Land-Use.** The Kennedy Avenue corridor contains a diverse mix of commercial uses including retail stores, service establishments, restaurants and auto-oriented commercial uses. It is also the site of several public facilities and institutional uses, as well as multi-family and single-family housing.

A new Walgreen's store was recently constructed at Kennedy Avenue and 169<sup>th</sup> Street, and this development has become a major commercial anchor along the corridor. Other prominent retail stores include Ace Hardware, Van Til's Supermarket (169<sup>th</sup> Street) and Village Discount Outlet (165<sup>th</sup> Street). Existing restaurants include Freddy's Steakhouse, Hessville Family Restaurant, McDonald's and Burger King.

Service uses are widely scattered along the corridor, and include Bank Calumet, Lake Federal Savings, Bank One, Regional Federal Credit Union, HH Finance, Ameritech, Virgil Huber Funeral Home, and Bocken Funeral Home. Kennedy Avenue also has numerous auto-related commercial uses including gas stations, service facilities, repair shops, used car lots, car washes, etc.

The Kennedy Avenue corridor is the site of several important public and institutional facilities, including the U.S. Post Office, Indiana College of Commerce, Hessville Assembly of God Church, Fire Station No. 6, Police Substation No. 7, and the YMCA-Hansen Center. In addition, a number of labor and fraternal organizations are located along and near the corridor.

A few residential uses are located along the Kennedy Avenue frontage, including apartment buildings at 164<sup>th</sup> Street and at Alexander Avenue, and a small mobile home court at Cleveland Street. In addition, single-family neighborhoods closely border the Kennedy Avenue corridor on both the east and west.

Even though the corridor is fully developed, there are several vacant land parcels and vacant structures scattered along the length of Kennedy Avenue.

- **Sites and Buildings.** The structural condition of most buildings along Kennedy Avenue ranges from fair to good. While few buildings are characterized by major deficiencies, many structures would benefit from minor maintenance and repair. Several occupied and vacant structures are characterized by more severe condition problems.

Most blocks along Kennedy Avenue are characterized by smaller, freestanding retail and commercial establishments located on small lots with very limited lot depths. The small lot sizes represent constraints for many contemporary commercial uses, particularly retail establishments.

- **Zoning.** The commercial frontage along Kennedy Avenue is zoned C-4: *General Commercial*. According to Hammond's *Zoning Ordinance*, C-4 is intended to serve larger-lot uses that typically entail little comparison shopping, require automobile access, and may not be compatible with other commercial or residential uses.

Uses permitted within C-4 include retail and service businesses, professional services, governmental functions, automobile sales and service, building materials, contractors, food processing and distribution, rental equipment, and material handling equipment sales and service. Conditional uses include: animal care and boarding, small laundries and packaging services, billboards, and arcades. Buildings may not occupy more than 50% of the total site area and must be no taller than 40 feet, or three stories.

The commercial properties along the south side of 165<sup>th</sup> Street just west of Kennedy Avenue are zoned C-1: *Local Commercial*. Most residential properties east of Kennedy are zoned R-1: *Single-Family Residential*, and most residential properties west of Kennedy are zoned R-2: *Two-Family Residential*.

- **Access and circulation.** Kennedy Avenue is an arterial street that runs the entire length of Hessville and extends to Cline Avenue to the north and to the Town of Schererville to the south. It carries relatively heavy traffic as it passes through Hessville, and much of this traffic has neither origin nor destination within the neighborhood.

Kennedy Avenue has a six-lane cross section within Hessville. It accommodates two moving lanes in each direction, with curb parking permitted along both sides of the street for most of its length. Curb parking is removed in several locations to allow the center lane to function as a left-turn lane. Traffic signals exist at Cleveland Street, 165<sup>th</sup> Street, Martha Street, 169<sup>th</sup> Street, Orchard Drive, and 173<sup>rd</sup> Street.

Traffic-related concerns along Kennedy Avenue include: a) traffic congestion and a relatively high frequency of accidents at the 165<sup>th</sup>, 169<sup>th</sup> and 173<sup>rd</sup> Street intersections; b) the need for intersection enhancements at 173<sup>rd</sup> Street; and c) the traffic delays and noise created by the at-grade rail crossing at the Norfolk Southern Railway main trunk line in the vicinity of 169<sup>th</sup> Street. In addition, because of its width and the amount of traffic it carries, Kennedy Avenue is difficult to cross for pedestrians.

- **Parking.** Most commercial uses along Kennedy Avenue have small, separate off-street parking lots served by individual access drives. Most parking lots are located either in front or at the side of commercial buildings.

Curb parking is permitted along both sides of Kennedy Avenue, except where it is removed to allow for left-turn lanes. Curb parking is also permitted on several of the east-west streets that intersect with Kennedy Avenue.

- **Appearance and Character.** While several of the newer buildings along Kennedy Avenue are attractively designed and are served by well-landscaped parking lots, most properties have a dated appearance and have little landscaping or green space. In addition, while several buildings have historic interest, little has been done to highlight or accentuate these structures. Few individual buildings are visually related to adjacent or nearby structures, and signage, storefronts, colors and building materials are not coordinated in most blocks.

The City recently installed new decorative lighting, street trees and sidewalk accents along Kennedy Avenue to enhance the appearance of the corridor and make it more pedestrian friendly. However, some sidewalk segments are relatively narrow, and a few are in poor condition. In addition, numerous driveways and curb cuts adversely impact pedestrian safety and convenience in many blocks.

In general, much could be done to improve the image and appearance of buildings, parking lots and site improvements along Kennedy Avenue, and to help visually unify the corridor as it passes through the Hessville Neighborhood.



## **IMPROVEMENT and DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES**

Kennedy Avenue should be upgraded as an attractive and convenient mixed-use corridor that serves and supports the Hessville Neighborhood, the Hammond community and the surrounding region. It should be improved as a traffic carrier, a shopping and service area for nearby residents, an employment area, and a more safe and convenient area for pedestrians and cyclists.

The image and appearance of Kennedy Avenue should also be significantly improved. Since it carries large numbers of motorists on a daily basis, it is perhaps the most highly visible part of the neighborhood. In many ways, it serves as a “front door” to both Hessville and to the City of Hammond.

Improvement and development recommendations for Kennedy Avenue are described below and highlighted in Figure 19. Recommendations relate to: a) land-use, b) sites and buildings, c) traffic circulation, d) parking, and e) streetscape. Potential development and redevelopment sites along Kennedy Avenue are discussed in a following section.

### ***Land-Use:***

- Kennedy Avenue should continue to be the site of a wide range of retail stores, business services, personal services, restaurants, and other commercial uses. While it should accommodate both community-wide and highway-oriented commercial uses, retail and service uses that serve the day-to-day needs of Hessville residents should be promoted.
- The basic land-use pattern of Kennedy Avenue is essentially established and major land-use changes are unlikely. However, the City should strive to enhance existing businesses, improve and upgrade properties in decline, and promote high quality new development and redevelopment in selected locations.
- The blocks between 167<sup>th</sup> and 171<sup>st</sup> Streets should be upgraded and enhanced as a neighborhood shopping and service center for nearby residential areas. Small retail stores, services, restaurants and public facilities should be promoted; used car lots, auto repair shops and similar uses should be discouraged in the blocks between 167<sup>th</sup> and 171<sup>st</sup> Streets. Store mix, the appearance of buildings and parking lots, the provision of pedestrian amenities and conveniences, commercial signage, and site landscaping should all be improved to create a distinctive image and identity for these blocks.
- New dining, family-oriented entertainment and cultural uses should be promoted along Kennedy Avenue. The existing Kennedy Theatre should be enhanced as a neighborhood focal point. Opportunities for a new cinema, a fitness center, a railroad museum and similar uses should be explored.
- While retail and service uses are preferred for most blocks along Kennedy Avenue, many of the small sites may prove to be more marketable for uses that require less parking and customer access, such as free-standing offices or compatible light industrial uses. In particular, business and employment uses should be considered for

buildings are also desirable along Kennedy Avenue, provided they are properly cared for and adequately maintained.

- The rear portions of commercial properties should be clean and well maintained. Rear entrances to stores and shops should be encouraged in blocks where public parking is located behind the buildings. Trash receptacles, dumpsters, service areas and outdoor storage facilities should be well-maintained and attractively screened.
- There are a few poorly screened and unattractive outdoor storage areas along Kennedy Avenue. Landscaping and fencing should be used to screen storage areas that are visible from the street. However, chain-link fencing, which is currently used in several locations, is not appropriate along Kennedy Avenue.

### ***New Development:***

- Opportunities for new development and redevelopment along Kennedy Avenue include vacant parcels and vacant buildings, and marginal and low-intensity uses. Since many of these properties occupy very small sites, the combination and consolidation of multiple properties should be encouraged in order to create more attractive redevelopment sites for contemporary commercial uses. Specific redevelopment sites are highlighted in a following subsection.
- As improvements and redevelopment take place along Kennedy Avenue, the City should encourage the grouping and clustering of buildings within the same block to permit the coordination of buildings, signage, parking areas, access drives and pedestrian amenities.
- New commercial buildings, particularly in the blocks between 167<sup>th</sup> and 171<sup>st</sup> Streets, should be located at or very near the sidewalk line in order to maintain close contact between pedestrians and the adjacent stores, shops and display windows. If buildings are set back from the sidewalk, landscaping and/or decorative amenities should be provided to maintain this pedestrian orientation.
- In general, buildings along Kennedy Avenue should “front” the street. The placement of buildings at odd or irregular angles to the street should be discouraged, although buildings at key intersections might include angled corners or other small setbacks.
- New development and redevelopment should include buffers from and have minimal impacts on adjacent residential uses.

### ***Traffic Circulation:***

- Even though the basic function and roadway width of Kennedy Avenue will not change, and no major traffic modifications are suggested, the City should continue to monitor traffic operations, turning movements and the adequacy of traffic signals and other controls to ensure that traffic moves smoothly and efficiently through the neighborhood.
- A number of blocks along Kennedy Avenue have multiple curb cuts that hamper traffic flow and pedestrian safety, and are also inefficient in terms of land development. Where possible, parking and service areas within the same block

should be reconfigured to allow for the consolidation of curb cuts and access drives. Access drives in certain blocks might be relocated to the east-west streets or to the alleys that parallel Kennedy Avenue.

- If the number of curb cuts can be reduced and access drives consolidated, the City should explore the possibility of new landscaped median treatments at certain locations along Kennedy Avenue. Landscaped medians at selected locations would not only improve traffic flow and traffic safety, but would dramatically improve the image and appearance of the corridor.
- It is currently difficult for pedestrians to cross Kennedy Avenue, and improved crosswalks would be desirable. This is important not only for the convenience of shoppers and business patrons, but for the safety of children and other residents moving between different parts of the neighborhood. Special paving materials and median treatments should be used to designate crosswalks.
- Several east-west streets that intersect with Kennedy Avenue have deteriorated surface conditions. Street surfaces in poor condition should be repaired. While surface conditions do not necessarily affect traffic circulation or safety, they do detract from the overall image and appearance of the corridor.
- To the extent possible, the barrier effect created by the Norfolk Southern Railway should be minimized. While the possibility of a new vehicular overpass or underpass was considered in the planning process, it is not recommended at this time due to its cost and the impact it would have on existing stores, homes and businesses. However, the City should work with the railroad to explore other opportunities for alleviating traffic congestion and traffic delays at the rail crossings within Hessville, including possible rerouting options. Additional landscaping and improved pedestrian crossings should also be used to help visually minimize the separation between the blocks north and south of the railroad.

### **Parking:**

- Because of the linear character of the Kennedy Avenue commercial area, off-street parking lots are among its most prominent visual features. Where possible, the appearance of parking areas should be improved through screening and buffering, landscaping strips around the periphery of lots, and interior landscaped islands.
- A few existing parking lots along Kennedy Avenue are characterized by cracked or gravel surfaces, holes or depressions, poor drainage, and general disrepair. Existing lots should be repaired, resurfaced and improved where necessary.
- Where possible, existing parking lots within the same block should be combined and redesigned to improve access and internal circulation and to provide additional parking spaces. Certain lots might require only re-striping of existing surfaces, while others could require more extensive redesign.
- Surface parking lots should be located behind buildings or at mid block where possible. Parking in front of buildings or at corner locations should be discouraged, particularly in the blocks between 167<sup>th</sup> and 171<sup>st</sup> Streets. Landscaping and/or

decorative fencing should be installed along the edges of surface parking lots that border public walkways.

- The City might consider one or more public off-street parking lots in the central portion of the corridor to serve stores and businesses near Martha Street. For example, a small public parking lot might be provided on the vacant land just north of the railroad.

### ***Streetscape:***

- The City should continue its program of streetscape improvements along Kennedy Avenue. The program should encompass sidewalks, curbs and gutters, landscaped parkways, street trees, light fixtures, public signage, and pedestrian amenities. The long-range objective should be a consistent and distinctive streetscape treatment for the entire length of Kennedy Avenue as it passes through the Hessville Neighborhood.
- Of special importance is the planting and upkeep of street trees along both sides of Kennedy Avenue. Size, shape and spacing should be different from trees planted along other streets in Hammond to signify the importance of this corridor. Perhaps more than any other single improvement, new street trees would help unify the appearance of Kennedy Avenue.
- Once installed, it is important that all streetscape facilities be adequately and attractively maintained. Trees and landscaping should be pruned, trimmed and upgraded on a regular basis, and adequate irrigation should be provided. Damaged and defective facilities should be repaired or replaced as required.
- Banners and graphics attached to streetlight fixtures should be considered along Kennedy Avenue. The height and size of banners should be in scale with other streetscape features and nearby buildings. Banners could be seasonal, or could signify special neighborhood events, celebrations or promotional activities. Local businesses and institutions might participate in the banner program. Bold colors and graphic designs can add a sense of life and vitality, as well as help visually unify the corridor.
- Even though small “welcome to Hammond” signs already exist, more extensive gateway design features should be considered where Kennedy Avenue and key east-west streets actually enter the Hessville Neighborhood. Gateway design features could include a special sign highlighting the Hessville Neighborhood, trees, shrubs, flowers, and perhaps a sculptural element.
- To supplement the corridor streetscape program, additional design improvements should be undertaken at selected “nodes” along Kennedy Avenue. For example, additional street trees, accent landscaping, small seating areas, kiosks and other amenities should be considered at the intersections of Kennedy Avenue with 169<sup>th</sup>, 165<sup>th</sup>, 173<sup>rd</sup> and Martha Streets.
- Public and directional signage should be improved. Attractive new signs should direct motorists and visitors to various points of interest within Hessville—such as Gibbon

Woods Nature Preserve, Dowling Park and the new intergenerational community center—and to public parking lots and key destinations along Kennedy Avenue.

- Overhead utility lines along Kennedy Avenue should be placed underground where possible. If this proves to be too costly or otherwise impractical, utility lines might be relocated to the alleys east and west of the corridor.
- The City should work with the Norfolk Southern Railway to provide landscaping and otherwise improve the appearance of the rail line as it passes through the Hessville Neighborhood. Trash and debris that collects along the railroad should also be cleaned up on a more regular basis.

### **POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENT and DEVELOPMENT SITES**

Even though the Kennedy Avenue corridor is fully developed and most existing uses are sound and viable, new development and redevelopment should be encouraged at selected locations.

While change could conceivably occur anywhere along Kennedy Avenue, there are several properties that appear to be susceptible to change in the future. They include vacant parcels and buildings; marginal and under-utilized properties; older and/or obsolete buildings; and parcels with deteriorated structures.

It should be emphasized that the inclusion of sites in this section does not imply that redevelopment will occur or that redevelopment is necessarily recommended as a part of the *Neighborhood Plan*. Rather, it suggests that these properties appear “susceptible” to change in the near future, or that they represent opportunities for new development. Because of this, the *Plan* should specify the type and character of new development to be promoted, if an opportunity for change arises.

Potential improvement and development sites along Kennedy Avenue, highlighted in Figure 19, include the following:

- **Vacant properties.** There are a few vacant buildings and land parcels scattered along the Kennedy Avenue corridor. Vacant properties should either be reused or redeveloped for new stores, businesses, parking or open space.
- **Marginal, under-utilized and severely deteriorated properties.** While Kennedy Avenue has few truly “incompatible” uses, several parcels are occupied by uses or buildings that are not ideally located along the corridor, or which represent an underutilization of prime frontage properties. In addition, a few buildings are characterized by major condition problems. These properties should either be substantially upgraded or replaced with new development.
- **Other commercial sites in need of improvement.** A number of other properties occupied by sound and viable businesses would benefit from either building or site improvements in the future. Included in this category are several auto repair shops, auto service facilities, used car lots, and similar uses. In general, all of these properties should be improved and upgraded; if improvement is not feasible, redevelopment should be considered.

- **Residential properties along Kennedy Avenue.** This category includes several single-family and multi-family properties located along the Kennedy Avenue frontage. As mentioned previously, residential properties are not appropriate along the corridor and should eventually be redeveloped for new uses.
- **Other nearby residential properties in need of improvement.** A few poorly maintained residential structures are located along the primary east-west streets that intersect with Kennedy Avenue. In general, these properties should either be substantially improved and upgraded or redeveloped. If redevelopment occurs on these properties, new residential uses would be appropriate.

### **Opportunity Sites:**

Figure 19 also highlights several clusters of properties along Kennedy Avenue that may represent opportunities for new retail, service or office development during the 10-year “horizon” of the *Hessville Neighborhood Plan*. The overall type, quality and character of new development to be considered at each location are described below. The City should continue to review and analyze these sites in the months ahead.

- **Site A** includes the west side of Kennedy Avenue, generally between 161<sup>st</sup> and 162<sup>nd</sup> Streets. It currently contains a mix of small commercial and residential uses and vacant properties.

Site A occupies a highly visible location at the northern “gateway” to the Kennedy Avenue corridor. However, several of the existing properties are characterized by underutilization, building condition problems and unsightly outdoor storage, and the area has a poor overall image and appearance.

Site A should be improved and redeveloped as a commercial and employment area and as a more attractive gateway to the neighborhood.

The vacant land on the north side of 161<sup>st</sup> Street should be more extensively landscaped as a gateway area. Improvement of this area should include a new “Welcome to Hessville” sign, as well as signage directing visitors to other neighborhood points of interest. If the IHB eventually phases out the historic roundhouse, and the facility is converted into a rail museum as has been discussed, Site A should also serve as an entryway to the museum area.

Improvement or redevelopment of the block between 161<sup>st</sup> and 162<sup>nd</sup> Streets for commercial and employment uses should be promoted. Individual properties might be improved or redeveloped separately, or several parcels might be combined to accommodate larger-scale new development. If existing uses are to remain, significant site and building enhancements should be undertaken. At a minimum, the existing residential properties fronting Kennedy Avenue in this block should be replaced with stores, businesses or parking.

- **Site B** includes the east side of Kennedy Avenue, north of Gibson Place. It currently contains several vacant buildings and land parcels and a used car lot at the corner of Kennedy Avenue and Gibson Place.

The vacant lot at the southwest corner of 169<sup>th</sup> Street and Kennedy Avenue is an ideal location for a new freestanding commercial or restaurant use. New auto-related uses should be discouraged at this corner site.

At a minimum, the existing multi-family developments along the north side of 169<sup>th</sup> Street should be substantially improved through building and site maintenance and more extensive landscaping. In the future, these properties might be redeveloped, perhaps for higher quality multi-family uses.

- **Site E** includes the west side of Kennedy Avenue, generally between Vine and 167<sup>th</sup> Streets. It currently contains a mix of small commercial uses, converted residential structures and two vacant properties.

In general, marginal uses, underutilization, building condition problems, and unsightly parking and storage areas characterize Site E.

Site E should be improved and redeveloped as a commercial service area. A wide range of retail, service, restaurant, entertainment and office uses would be suitable in this area, as well as public and semi-public uses. While not preferred, auto repair shops, service facilities and used car lots might also be acceptable.

Individual properties might be improved or redeveloped separately, or several parcels might be combined to accommodate larger-scale new development. Where possible, the clustering of buildings should be promoted to allow for the coordination of access drives and parking lots. If existing uses are to remain, site and building enhancements should be undertaken.

- **Site F** includes the east side of Kennedy Avenue, between 167<sup>th</sup> Street and the railroad. It currently contains a mix of small retail and service uses, public and semi-public facilities, and several vacant storefronts.

Site F occupies a key location at the heart of the Kennedy Avenue shopping area. However, while it contains some important existing uses and several buildings with historic interest, it is generally characterized by a dated appearance, vacancies, and a few poorly maintained buildings and unsightly properties.

The City should promote revitalization of Site F as a pedestrian-oriented shopping and service area for the Hessville Neighborhood. The mix of stores and businesses should be upgraded. Small retail, service, restaurant and public uses that provide for the day-to-day needs of nearby residents should be promoted within these blocks. Mixed-use buildings with residential units on the upper floors would also be appropriate. Used car lots, auto repair shops and similar uses should not be permitted within these blocks.

Existing buildings should be improved and upgraded, particularly those with historic interest. Storefront improvements should be undertaken to visually unify structures within the same block.

Small-scale infill development should be promoted at the north and south ends of Site F, and in other appropriate locations. New buildings should be compatible in



scale and character with nearby two-story historic buildings, and should be located at the edge of the sidewalk to maintain the "streetwall" effect within this area.

Parking within Site F should be located behind buildings or in well-landscaped lots along the railroad corridor at the south end of this area. The City should consider providing one or more public parking lots within this area to support existing stores and encourage new investment and development. The vacant land just north of the railroad would be an ideal location for a new parking lot.

In addition, the City should also consider rezoning the blocks between 167<sup>th</sup> Street and the railroad to C-1: *Local Commercial*, which would be more appropriate for a "neighborhood center" type of development.

- **Site G** includes the properties along 169<sup>th</sup> Street between McCook and Kennedy Avenues. It currently contains a diverse mix of commercial, industrial, public and residential properties, including Van Til's Supermarket, Blockbuster Video, Bank One, a fire station, and St. Mary's Cemetery.

Site G occupies a highly visible location at an important western "gateway" to the Hessville Neighborhood. However, the area is characterized by a disorganized development pattern, several incompatible land-uses and under-utilized properties, unsightly parking and storage areas, and a poor overall image and appearance.

The City should promote area-wide reorganization and reconfiguration of Site G as a major shopping and service focal point for the Hessville Neighborhood. New retail, service and family-oriented entertainment uses should be promoted. Auto-related uses should be discouraged in this area.

The north side of 169<sup>th</sup> Street should be reorganized, improved and enhanced as a coordinated shopping area. Van Til's and Blockbuster Video should be retained as anchor uses, and KFC and several other exiting uses might also be retained. However, existing industrial, "heavy" commercial and residential uses should be removed to allow for new retail and service development. Additional stores and businesses should be promoted along the 169<sup>th</sup> Street frontage, to the east and west of the existing parking lots. An attractive landscaped setback should also be provided along 169<sup>th</sup> Street.

It is recommended that the north side of 169<sup>th</sup> Street be reorganized and redeveloped according to an overall, area-wide master development plan or "planned unit development" to ensure the coordination of building sites, parking lots, access drives and pedestrian amenities.

Most existing uses along the south side of 169<sup>th</sup> Street could be retained, although residential uses in the block east of Alexander and Marshall Avenues should eventually be replaced with office or service uses.

New pedestrian and streetscape improvements should be undertaken along both sides of 169<sup>th</sup> Street to better link this shopping and service area to the remainder of the Hessville Neighborhood.

- **Site H** includes the west side of Kennedy Avenue, from 170<sup>th</sup> Street south to Bocken Funeral Home. It currently contains the Alexander Apartments, a mix of small commercial uses, and a few vacant properties.

In general, marginal uses, incompatible land-uses, under-utilized properties and minor building condition problems characterize Site H.

Site H should be improved and redeveloped as a commercial service area. A range of retail, service, restaurant, entertainment and office uses would be suitable in this area, as well as public and semi-public uses. While not preferred, auto repair shops, service facilities and used car lots might also be acceptable.

Individual properties might be improved or redeveloped separately, or several parcels might be combined to accommodate larger-scale new development. Where possible, the clustering of buildings should be promoted to allow for the coordination of access drives and parking lots. If existing uses are to remain, site and building enhancements should be undertaken.

- **Site I** includes the west side of Kennedy Avenue, from 171<sup>st</sup> Street south to the Regional Federal Credit Union. It currently contains a mix of small commercial uses, single-family homes, and a few vacant properties.

In general, marginal uses, incompatible land-uses, under-utilized properties and minor building condition problems characterize Site I.

Site I should be improved and redeveloped as a commercial service area. A range of retail, service, restaurant, entertainment and office uses would be suitable in this area, as well as public and semi-public uses. Auto repair shops, service facilities and used car lots would also be acceptable.

Individual properties might be improved or redeveloped separately, or several parcels might be combined to accommodate larger-scale new development. Where possible, the clustering of buildings should be promoted to allow for the coordination of access drives and parking lots. If existing uses are to remain, site and building enhancements should be undertaken. At a minimum, the existing single-family homes fronting Kennedy Avenue should be replaced with stores, businesses or parking.

- **Site J** includes the properties around the intersection of 174<sup>th</sup> Street and Kennedy Avenue. It currently contains Hessville Park, a mix of small commercial and auto-related uses, a residential structure, and a few vacant properties.

Site J should be improved and enhanced as a major "gateway" to the Hessville Neighborhood. While most existing uses are sound and viable, existing properties should be enhanced through storefront, parking lot and landscaping improvements. Small commercial "infill" projects might also be undertaken on selected properties at the northwest and southwest quadrants of this intersection.

Ideally, auto-related uses, such as repair shops and used car lots, should not be located at the highly visible corner of Kennedy Avenue and 173<sup>rd</sup> Street. However, if the existing auto-related uses at the southwest corner are to remain, parking lots and outdoor storage areas should be more attractively screened and landscaped.

Improvement of Site J should include a new "Welcome to Hessville" sign, as well as signage directing visitors to Dowling Park, the new intergenerational community center, and other neighborhood points of interest. The City should also explore opportunities for improving traffic connections and operational conditions at 174<sup>th</sup> Street and the frontage road, which will become an important access route to the new intergenerational community center.

## *Subarea 2:*

### **169TH STREET/GRAND AVENUE**

Subarea 2 encompasses the Briar East Shopping Center and other properties near the intersection of 169<sup>th</sup> Street and Grand Avenue. This subarea consists primarily of commercial properties, vacant/wooded areas, and single-family and multi-family residential properties. Public/institutional uses, such as the Howard Branch Library and Morton High School, are also within the subarea.

169<sup>th</sup> Street is a major east-west arterial street that connects Hessville to Cline Avenue, the City of Gary, and other areas of Hammond to the west. Grand Avenue is a north-south arterial that primarily accommodates local traffic, rather than regional trips through Hammond. The area surrounding the intersection of these two streets is comprised of a mix of uses including retail, restaurants, commercial service, institutional, office, and vacant properties, all surrounded by residential neighborhoods.

While the 169<sup>th</sup> Street/Grand Avenue subarea is largely developed, vacant areas and under-utilized properties provide an opportunity for further improvement and development. The subarea's overall character and appearance can be greatly enhanced and upgraded, and the subarea revitalized via improvements to both public and private properties.

#### **PLANNING INFLUENCES**

Several factors will influence opportunities for improvement and development within the 169<sup>th</sup> Street/Grand Avenue subarea. Planning influences include: a) existing land-use, b) sites and buildings, c) current zoning, d) access and circulation, e) parking, and f) appearance and character. Planning influences are illustrated in Figure 20.

- **Existing Land-Use.** The 169<sup>th</sup> Street /Grand Avenue subarea is centrally located within the Hessville Neighborhood and contains a diverse mix of uses including retail stores, service establishments, restaurants, auto-related uses, public facilities, and both single-family and multi-family housing. Although most of the commercial uses in the subarea are along 169<sup>th</sup> Street, some commercial uses extend to the north and south along Grand Avenue.

Briar East Shopping Center is a commercial focal point for the neighborhood. The shopping center occupies a significant amount of land relative to other commercial uses in the area, and is in need of significant improvement to realize its potential as a strong and viable neighborhood shopping center. Other smaller commercial uses exist along 169<sup>th</sup> Street and Grand Avenue, and most are in need of site and building improvements, ranging from minor maintenance issues to a need for total redevelopment.

In addition to the shopping center and some smaller retail uses, other commercial uses include service uses, restaurants, and auto-oriented uses. Service uses in the subarea include Modern Way Cleaners, a barber shop, Mercantile Bank, Lake County Child Care, and Lake County Addiction and Family Services. Several restaurants are

also located within the subarea, including Lung Wan, La Joya, Long John Silvers, L.A. Shrimp, Camino Real, Zante's Restaurant, McDonald's, and Maliks. Auto-related uses include the Marathon Service Station, Clark Service Station, and the Mirror Finish Hand Car Wash.

The subarea is also the location of some important public/institutional facilities, including Morton High School, the Howard Branch Library, and Iglesia Del Pueblo Christian Church.

Single-family homes exist along the north side of 169<sup>th</sup> Street and at locations to the south of the subarea. Larger multi-family residential developments in the subarea include the Brook Forest Apartments on 169<sup>th</sup> Street and Ridgewood Condominiums on the northwest corner of Grand Avenue and 171<sup>st</sup> Street. Generally, residential neighborhoods surround the subarea in all directions. Although most of the residential areas surrounding the subarea are developed for single-family homes, a significant amount of multi-family residential dwellings are present in the neighborhood.

Large areas of vacant/wooded land exist centrally within the subarea, in addition to some vacant land parcels and vacant structures scattered along 169<sup>th</sup> Street and Grand Avenue.

- **Sites and Buildings.** The structural condition of most buildings within the subarea ranges from good to fair. Few buildings are characterized by major deficiencies. Most structures would benefit from minor maintenance and repair, but are in generally sound condition. Vacant buildings, such as the former gas station on the northeast corner of Grand Avenue and 169<sup>th</sup> Street will require major improvements if the existing structure is to be reused.

The subarea is not characterized by a single development pattern, but rather is made up of independently developed properties that vary in size and orientation. With the exception of Briar East Shopping Center, most commercial uses are situated on relatively small lots with buildings oriented toward 169<sup>th</sup> Street or Grand Avenue. Several commercial properties are on small lots, resulting in developed properties that provide little or no landscaping/screening, and have parking areas immediately adjacent to the public sidewalks.

- **Zoning.** There are three different commercial zoning designations in the 169<sup>th</sup> Street/Grand Avenue subarea. The Briar East Shopping Center is zoned C-2: *Shopping Center*, the small commercial "strip" center on the north side of 169<sup>th</sup> Street near Parrish Avenue is zoned C-1: *Local Commercial*, and the commercial uses on Grand Avenue north of 169<sup>th</sup> Street and the commercial uses on the north side of 169<sup>th</sup> Street east of Grand Avenue are zoned C-4: *General Commercial*.

The C-1 zoned properties (near Parrish Avenue) are intended to provide for the day-to-day needs of the adjacent residential neighborhoods, including retail, personal and professional services, and government/public uses and facilities. The C-2 zoned property (Briar East Shopping center) is intended to provide a harmonious, efficient and convenient retail shopping center, prohibiting residential and industrial uses or other uses that would interfere with providing a shopping and service area for

surrounding residential properties. The C-4 zoned properties (near the intersection of 169<sup>th</sup> Street and Grand Avenue) are intended to provide automotive, service, and freestanding commercial activities, uses that are often not compatible with other commercial or residential districts. Generally, commercial uses in the subarea reflect uses allowed under the designated zoning districts.

In addition to commercially zoned areas, portions of the subarea are zoned for residential and industrial uses. Brook Forest Apartments, Ridgewood Condominiums, the small subdivision off Parrish Avenue, and the wooded areas in between are all zoned R-3: *Medium-Density Residential*. Permitted uses in the R-3 district include single-family, two-family, and multi-family residential dwelling units. The intent of the district is to permit residential development in a manner consistent with creating a medium-density living environment. The single-family homes located along the north side of 169<sup>th</sup> Street are zoned R-1: *Single-Family Residential*. The R-1 district permits single-family detached dwellings, typically set on "large" building lots. The only industrial zoned area near the subarea consists of the properties along 169<sup>th</sup> Place west of Parrish Avenue, which are zoned I-1: *Light Industrial*. The I-1 district is intended to provide sites for heavy commercial and light manufacturing activities employing relatively large numbers of people. Like the commercial uses, the residential and industrial uses in the area generally reflect the permitted uses for each zoning district.

- **Access and Circulation.** 169<sup>th</sup> Street is an arterial street that extends through the subarea from east to west, connecting it to Cline Avenue and the City of Gary to the east and other parts of Hammond to the west. It carries relatively heavy traffic as it passes through Hessville, and much of this traffic has neither origin nor destination within the neighborhood.

Grand Avenue is a collector street and runs north and south from 163<sup>rd</sup> Street on the north to Orchard Drive on the south. Both 169<sup>th</sup> Street and Grand Avenue are part of the public transportation route serving the Hessville Neighborhood.

Traffic-related concerns along the 169<sup>th</sup> Street and Grand Avenue corridors include: a) a relatively high frequency of accidents on 169<sup>th</sup> Street at the Parrish Avenue and Grand Avenue intersections; b) the need for intersection enhancements at 169<sup>th</sup> Street and Grand Avenue; c) at-grade railroad crossing related problems on 169<sup>th</sup> Street near Kennedy Avenue; and d) the general need for street maintenance/repair near the intersection of 169<sup>th</sup> Street and Grand Avenue.

- **Parking.** Most commercial uses within the subarea have small, separate off-street parking lots served by individual access drives. Most parking lots are located either in front or at the side of commercial buildings. Overall, it appears that the commercial and residential uses in the subarea are adequately served by the existing supply of parking. Almost all surface parking lots in the subarea lack screening and landscaping, and several parking lots are in need of repair, resurfacing and restriping.

On-street parking is not permitted along 169<sup>th</sup> Street, but it is allowed on portions of Grand Avenue and on the other cross streets running north and south through the subarea.

- **Appearance and Character.** Most of the commercial properties within the subarea have a dated appearance and have little landscaping or green space. A majority of the commercial properties do not provide any parking lot landscaping or screening. This “open” parking lot pattern and overall lack of landscaping contributes greatly to the overall unattractive appearance and character of the subarea. Commercial buildings and signage often appear dated and show signs of deferred maintenance and years of wear. The two larger multi-family complexes in the subarea are among the most well-maintained and attractive properties. The single-family homes along 169<sup>th</sup> Street are generally in sound condition, but most could benefit from improved screening and upkeep. The Morton High School property has the location and size needed to establish a strong visual presence and character in the subarea, yet it fails to take advantage of the opportunity, and instead suffers from a general lack of landscaping, parking lot screening, and overall site aesthetics.

In general, much could be done to improve the image and appearance of buildings, parking lots, site improvements and parkways within the 169<sup>th</sup> Street/Grand Avenue subarea, and to help visually unify the area as a neighborhood shopping, service, and activity center. 169<sup>th</sup> Street needs a variety of streetscape improvements, including such components as landscaping, lighting, signage, pedestrian amenities, and parking lot screening.

## **IMPROVEMENT and DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES**

The 169<sup>th</sup> Street/Grand Avenue subarea should be upgraded as an attractive and convenient mixed-use area that serves and supports the Hessville Neighborhood, the Hammond community and the surrounding region. While serving an area larger than the Hessville Neighborhood, the subarea’s primary focus should be on providing day-to-day shopping and services for the surrounding residential neighborhood. Overall traffic and circulation should be improved to provide a more safe and convenient environment for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists.

The image and appearance of the subarea should also be significantly improved. The subarea is centrally located within Hessville and should reflect the desired character and appearance of the neighborhood. Because the subarea is at the “heart” of the neighborhood and because large numbers of motorists pass through the area daily, its role as a vital and identifiable part of the Hessville Neighborhood is especially important. To many who pass through the subarea, it is considered to reflect and represent the entire neighborhood.

Improvement and development recommendations for the 169<sup>th</sup> Street/Grand Avenue subarea are described below and highlighted in Figure 21. Recommendations relate to: a) land-use, b) sites and buildings, c) traffic circulation, d) parking, and e) streetscape. Potential development and redevelopment sites within the subarea are discussed in a following section.

### **Land-Use:**

- The 169<sup>th</sup> Street/Grand Avenue subarea should continue to support a wide range of retail stores, business services, personal services, restaurants, and other commercial



uses. The primary focus of commercial uses in the area should be to meet the day-to-day needs of nearby Hessville residents. Commercial uses in the area should also be capable of drawing customers from beyond Hessville, and provide uses which strengthen the area as a commercial core of the neighborhood.

- Major land-use changes which might affect the commercial areas of the subarea are unlikely. Focus should be on improving, upgrading or redeveloping the existing commercial areas, rather than establishing any new commercial areas.
- Briar East Shopping Center should be revitalized as the neighborhood's central shopping area. The shopping center site should be viewed as one property, which it is, rather than focusing on one particular building or use within the shopping center property. Store mix, the appearance of buildings and parking lots, the provision of pedestrian amenities and conveniences, commercial signage, and site landscaping should all be improved to create a distinctive image and identity for the shopping center. The property should reflect a pedestrian design and character and be improved as a "neighborhood-oriented shopping center".
- The restaurants and smaller commercial uses on 169<sup>th</sup> Street are appropriate for the area. However, commercial uses along the north side of 169<sup>th</sup> Street should be confined to the areas of existing commercial properties. Residential properties should be improved to stabilize the neighborhood and should not be converted to commercial use. On the north side of 169<sup>th</sup> Street, the block between Parrish and Idaho Avenues, and the blocks between Grand and New Jersey Avenues, should remain commercial. The property on the northwest corner of Grand Avenue and 169<sup>th</sup> Street should also be considered for residential use. If redeveloped for other than residential use, the property should be used for a residential-compatible low-intensity commercial use.
- The outside storage of vehicles, primarily associated with the Marathon service station on the southwest corner of 169<sup>th</sup> Street and Grand Avenue, should be required to be screened if vehicle storage is to continue as a permitted use in the area.
- The substantial area of vacant/wooded land should be designated for new residential development. The area should be developed primarily for single-family detached homes, with the possibility of accommodating some low/medium-density owner-occupied multi-family units. The City may need to consider changing the zoning of the wooded areas from *R-3* to *R-2*, *R-1*, or *Residential P.U.D.* Such a change in zoning would restrict the density and amount of multi-family development, and direct development toward single-family detached residences.
- The existing apartment complexes, Brook Forest Apartments and Ridgewood Condominiums, both appear to be well-maintained properties and appropriate uses for the area. Over time, consideration may be given to converting Brook Forest Apartments to an owner-occupied or senior housing development. Such a transition may be in response to a changing market for alternative housing options.

- The 169<sup>th</sup> Street/Grand Avenue subarea is an appropriate location within the neighborhood for the high school and library branch facility. These institutional uses should be maintained and enhanced as important neighborhood assets. If possible, additional appropriate and compatible public and institutional uses should also be encouraged within the subarea. As a centrally located area within the neighborhood, public/institutional uses would be easily accessible to Hessville residents.
- The City should review current zoning within the subarea to ensure that it supports the *Neighborhood Plan*. Residential zoning changes should be considered for the wooded areas, from R-3 to R1, R-2, or *Residential P.U.D.* Other commercial and residential zoning seems appropriate for the area. The industrial zoning on 169<sup>th</sup> Place is appropriate and located in an area that is relatively buffered from other areas.
- Non-residential uses within the subarea should be screened and buffered, as appropriate, to minimize impacts on adjacent residential areas.

### ***Existing Sites and Buildings:***

- Although most existing commercial buildings within the subarea are sound and well-maintained, some are characterized by deferred maintenance. All deficient buildings should be repaired and rehabilitated as required.
- Although most existing commercial buildings are occupied, some vacant buildings exist within the subarea. Vacant buildings, such as the vacant gas station on the northeast corner of 169<sup>th</sup> Street and Grand Avenue, should be reused for new businesses, or be removed to allow for new development.
- Briar East Shopping Center and other commercial properties fronting 169<sup>th</sup> Street and Grand Avenue are characterized by an appearance that lacks contemporary upgrades and presents an aesthetic that has not been improved in many years. Appearance improvements should focus on building facades, windows and doors, signs, colors, awnings and canopies, and related design features. More design consistency and compatibility should be promoted among commercial uses within the subarea.
- In addition to new street trees and landscaping along the public rights-of-way, more extensive landscaping of private properties should be encouraged. Landscaping can effectively screen and buffer parking and service areas, and can emphasize major access points to commercial properties. Small landscaped areas in front of commercial buildings are also desirable for commercial properties within the subarea. Lack of landscaping/screening on private property is one of the most noticeable deficiencies in the subarea, and the one that contributes most significantly to the overall unattractive appearance of commercial properties.
- The service areas and rear portions of commercial properties should be clean and well-maintained. Trash receptacles, dumpsters, service areas and outdoor storage facilities should be well-maintained and attractively screened.
- There are a few poorly screened and unattractive outdoor storage areas within the corridor, such as the auto storage associated with the Marathon service station on

the southwest corner of 169<sup>th</sup> Street and Grand Avenue. Landscaping and/or appropriate fencing should be used to screen storage areas that are visible from the street.

- While the majority of single-family residential properties along the north side of 169<sup>th</sup> Street are in sound condition, many would benefit from enhanced landscaping and screening to mitigate their proximity to 169<sup>th</sup> Street.

### ***New Development:***

- Opportunities for new development and redevelopment within the 169<sup>th</sup> Street/Grand Avenue subarea include vacant parcels and vacant buildings, and marginal and under-utilized properties. Vacant sites and buildings include smaller properties along the north side of 169<sup>th</sup> Street and the large wooded/vacant areas south of the 169<sup>th</sup> Street development. Marginal and under-utilized properties include the Briar East Shopping Center and adjacent commercial uses. The attractiveness of improving/redeveloping the shopping center property is that it is a relatively large property, capable of accommodating a variety of contemporary commercial designs and uses. Other potential commercial improvement/redevelopment sites in the subarea are limited by small lot sizes and shallow depths.
- Possibly the greatest potential for new development in the subarea is with the large wooded/vacant areas. These areas should primarily be developed in a manner similar to Higgins Park Addition – single-family detached dwellings on large lots. In coordination with the development of single-family homes, consideration should also be given to developing appropriate new low/medium-density, owner-occupied condominiums, townhomes, and senior housing. One scenario could be: condominiums and townhomes west of Parrish Avenue, new senior housing adjacent to the Ridgewood complex, and single-family homes between Parrish Avenue and the alignment of Kentucky Avenue. Such a development would provide a variety of attractive and needed housing types while maintaining the desired overall single-family residential character. Any development should plan for and provide a network of connecting roads rather than a series of cul-de-sacs and dead ends. New roads should connect between Parrish, Idaho, and Kentucky Avenues.
- Smaller vacant lots on the north side of 169<sup>th</sup> Street should be developed for single-family homes. The exception to this is the vacant lot on the northwest corner of 169<sup>th</sup> Street and Grand Avenue. This corner lot could also be considered for a low-intensity commercial use which would be compatible with adjacent residential properties.
- All new development should reflect the desired character and appearance of the Hessville Neighborhood and contribute to strengthening the 169<sup>th</sup> Street/Grand Avenue subarea as the “commercial center” of the neighborhood, surrounded by quality residential uses.
- New development and redevelopment should include buffers from and have minimal impacts on adjacent residential areas.

### ***Traffic Circulation:***

- The basic street pattern of the subarea is in place and is not likely to change significantly, with regard to 169<sup>th</sup> Street, Grand Avenue, and the existing cross streets that run north-south and east-west through the neighborhood. The focus should be on improving the operational condition of the traffic and the physical condition of the street and access network. Improvements to these components will improve the safety and efficiency of circulation.
- Where possible, parking and service areas within the same block should be reconfigured to allow for the consolidation of curb cuts and access drives. Examples of consolidated access include the Lung Wan and La Joya restaurants and the Briar East Shopping Center. Most smaller commercial uses have independent access from 169<sup>th</sup> Street, but future development/redevelopment efforts should seek to minimize curb cuts whenever possible.
- If the number of curb cuts can be reduced and access drives consolidated, the City should explore the possibility of new landscaped median treatments at certain locations along Kennedy Avenue. Landscaped medians at selected locations would not only improve traffic flow and traffic safety, but would dramatically improve the image and appearance of the corridor.
- It is currently difficult for pedestrians to cross 169<sup>th</sup> Street, and improved crosswalks would be desirable. Most pedestrians cross at Grand or Parrish Avenues, but improvements to these intersections, as well as improvements at other locations, are desirable. This is important not only for the convenience of shoppers and business patrons, but for the safety of children and other residents moving between the school, library, and shopping and residential areas of the neighborhood. Special paving materials and median treatments should be used to designate crosswalks.
- The area near the intersection of 169<sup>th</sup> Street and Grand Avenue is in need of street improvement/repair, as are other streets within the subarea. Street surfaces in poor condition should be repaired. While surface conditions do not dramatically affect traffic circulation or safety, they do detract from the overall image and appearance of the corridor.
- 169<sup>th</sup> Street is in need of re-striping. The faded and worn condition of existing striping is insufficient for the current volume of traffic and activity. 169<sup>th</sup> Street should be re-striped so as to clearly demark traffic lanes, turning lanes, intersection stop bars, and other directional/controlling identifications.
- The only new roads needed in the subarea will be those associated with the development of the wooded/vacant areas. As the wooded/vacant areas are developed for single-family homes, a network of streets will be required. New streets should provide a "looped" or "continuous" road system throughout the new development. The use of cul-de-sacs should be minimized. Connections should be provided between Parrish, Idaho, and Kentucky Avenues.

- A continuous sidewalk system should also be a part of any new development of the vacant/wooded areas. A sidewalk/path network should allow safe and efficient access throughout the residential areas, and also connect the residential to the adjacent commercial areas.

### **Parking:**

- Surface parking lots along 169<sup>th</sup> Street are the most prominent visual feature within the subarea, and they contribute greatly to the overall unattractive appearance of the area. Where possible, the appearance of parking areas should be improved through screening and buffering, landscaping strips around the periphery of lots, and interior landscaped islands.
- Several parking lots are characterized by cracked or deteriorating surfaces, holes or depressions, poor drainage, and general disrepair. The shopping center parking lot is especially in need of repair. Existing lots should be repaired, resurfaced and improved where necessary.
- In addition to resurfacing deteriorating parking lots, existing parking lots within the same block should be combined and redesigned to improve access and internal circulation and to provide additional parking spaces. Certain lots might require only re-striping of existing surfaces, while others could require more extensive redesign. Opportunities for combining adjacent parking lots will be limited, but whenever possible such improvements should be utilized. Unified parking lots and combined access currently exists with the Lung Wan and La Joya restaurants. Similar combined parking and access may also be possible with such adjacent properties as McDonald's and Maliks Restaurants.
- In general, uses in the 169<sup>th</sup> Street/Grand Avenue subarea are served by an adequate number of parking spaces. The primary focus should be on improving the condition, appearance/screening, and overall design of parking areas. Landscaping should be the primary tool used to improve the appearance and provide screening for parking areas.

### **Streetscape:**

- A streetscape improvement program should be developed and implemented along 169<sup>th</sup> Street, with an emphasis placed on the 169<sup>th</sup> Street/Grand Avenue subarea. The program should encompass sidewalks, curbs and gutters, landscaped parkways, street trees, light fixtures, public signage, and pedestrian and bicycle amenities. The long-range objective should be a consistent and distinctive streetscape treatment for the length of 169<sup>th</sup> Street as it passes through the subarea. Similar streetscape enhancements should extend north and south on Grand Avenue to improve the appearance of commercial and public/institutional properties.
- Noticeably missing throughout much of the subarea is a parkway along 169<sup>th</sup> Street. Along many properties, surface parking lots on private property are immediately adjacent to the public sidewalk, and the sidewalk is immediately adjacent to the curb. This leaves little opportunity for streetscape improvements and landscaping within

the right-of-way. It is important that the City does what it can to establish a parkway and corresponding landscape treatment wherever possible. If a continuous parkway with street trees is not possible, then strategic landscape “islands” can be used at key locations to improve the appearance of the corridor. Street trees, together with private property parking lot screening/landscaping, would do more to improve the appearance of the subarea than any other effort.

- Once installed, it is important that all streetscape facilities be adequately and attractively maintained. Trees and landscaping should be pruned, trimmed and upgraded on a regular basis. Damaged and defective facilities should be repaired or replaced as required.
- Banners and graphics attached to streetlight fixtures should be considered along 169<sup>th</sup> Street, and possibly along Grand Avenue, to include the school, library, and other commercial uses. Banners could be seasonal, or could signify special neighborhood events, celebrations or promotional activities. Local businesses and institutions might participate in the banner program. Bold colors and graphic designs can add a sense of life and vitality, as well as help visually unify the subarea as the “center” of Hessville.
- Gateway design features should be considered for a location on 169<sup>th</sup> Street, east of the subarea, to greet travelers exiting Cline Avenue and heading west, or entering Hammond from Gary. Gateway design features could include a special sign highlighting the Hessville Neighborhood, trees, shrubs, flowers, and perhaps a sculptural element.
- To supplement the corridor streetscape program, additional design improvements should be undertaken at selected “nodes” along 169<sup>th</sup> Street. For example, additional street trees, accent landscaping, small seating areas, kiosks and other amenities should be considered at the intersections of 169<sup>th</sup> Street with Grand and Parrish Avenues.
- Public and directional signage should be improved. Attractive new signs should direct motorists and visitors to various points of interest within Hessville—such as Gibson Woods Nature Preserve, Dowling Park and the proposed intergenerational community center—and to public parking lots and key destinations within the subarea.

### **POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENT and DEVELOPMENT SITES**

While change could conceivably occur anywhere within the 169<sup>th</sup> Street/Grand Avenue subarea, there are several properties that appear to be susceptible to change in the future. Several of the sites that are susceptible to change are presented in this section. It should be emphasized that the inclusion of sites in this section does not imply that redevelopment will occur or that redevelopment is necessarily recommended as a part of the *Neighborhood Plan*. Rather, it suggests that these properties appear “susceptible” to change in the near future, or that they represent opportunities for new development. Because of this, the *Plan* should specify the type and character of new development to be promoted, if change does indeed take place.

Potential improvement and development sites within the 169<sup>th</sup> Street/Grand Avenue subarea (highlighted in Figure 21) include the following:

- **Briar East Shopping Center.** Briar East Shopping Center is the largest commercial property in the subarea and presents the greatest opportunity for commercial redevelopment. Although the shopping center is currently occupied by several successful businesses, the center as a whole appears under-utilized and is struggling to fulfill its potential within the neighborhood. Even if not completely redeveloped, the shopping center should be targeted for substantial improvement. Improvements should include: perimeter and interior parking lot landscaping; parking redesign, resurfacing, and re-striping; identification and entry signage enhancements; building façade upgrades; additional pedestrian and bicycle amenities; and a stronger tenant mix.

Uses in the shopping center should be geared toward serving the daily shopping and service needs of the surrounding neighborhood. Desired uses include a neighborhood grocery store, pharmacy/drug store, clothing stores, home furnishings, and more. Many of the existing uses are desired and could remain as part of any improvement or redevelopment effort.

- **Vacant Gas Station Property.** The vacant gas station property on the northeast corner of 169<sup>th</sup> Street and Grand Avenue should be redeveloped. It is not likely that the site will be redeveloped as part of a larger effort including either the “strip” center to the north or Zante’s Restaurant to the east, but rather as a “stand alone” site. The site is relatively small but is ideally located for good visibility and access. As an independent site, it would likely be most successful as a restaurant or commercial service use, rather than retail. Another service station would be appropriate, as would any number of other service uses.
- **Other commercial sites in need of improvement.** A number of other properties occupied by sound and viable businesses would benefit from either building or site improvements in the future. Included in this category are several retail, commercial service, and restaurant uses along 169<sup>th</sup> Street and Grand Avenue. In general, all of these properties should be improved and upgraded. One of the biggest needs is for parking lot landscaping and screening. If improvement is not feasible, redevelopment should be considered. If redevelopment is considered, adjacent properties should be consolidated where possible. Consolidating adjacent properties allows greater redevelopment opportunity and makes sites more accommodating for contemporary commercial uses.
- **Residential properties along 169<sup>th</sup> Street.** The residential properties along the north side of 169<sup>th</sup> Street should be maintained and enhanced. Most of these homes are in sound condition and together contribute to the overall character of the area. Existing homes and properties should be improved and upgraded and vacant residential properties should be developed with new single-family homes. Similar to the commercial properties in the subarea, significant upgrades in appearance should be achieved through the use of landscaping and screening, and right-of-way improvements.



- **Wooded/Vacant Areas.** The large wooded areas that exist south of the Briar East Shopping Center and Brook Forest Apartments should be developed for new single-family detached homes – similar to the Higgins Park Addition. In an existing, primarily “built-out” neighborhood, it is often difficult to develop a significant amount of new single-family homes. The wooded/vacant area presents a great opportunity to strengthen the neighborhood by building several new quality homes in an attractive setting. If done effectively, a new subdivision of homes could be developed that would take advantage of the heavily wooded area and existing water feature to create a tranquil park-like setting. The new homes would help to stabilize the neighborhood and provide “step-up” housing for existing residents looking for a larger home and “move-in” housing for new families moving into Hessville. Pedestrian and bicycle paths should link these residential areas to adjacent commercial areas.
- **Public/Institutional Facilities.** This subarea of Hessville contains several public/institutional properties that should be improved and upgraded. Most of the improvements to these properties should be in the form of improved landscaping and screening. Morton High School, Howard Branch Library, the North Township Cemetery, and the water tank property all present opportunities to establish a character for the subarea and the Hessville Neighborhood. The cemetery, water tank, and high school property are all highly visible and hold strategic locations along 169<sup>th</sup> Street. These properties should be improved in a coordinated manner using landscaping, screening, decorative fencing, lighting, signage and other treatments to establish a desired appearance. The improvement of these properties should establish the “standard” for improvements elsewhere along 169<sup>th</sup> Street and throughout the subarea. The City must first improve the appearance of its own properties before it can reasonably expect a significant improvement effort from private property owners.
- **Brook Forest Apartments.** This apartment complex occupies a prominent and highly visible location within the subarea and within the Hessville Neighborhood. The property and buildings appear well-maintained and attractively landscaped, offering one of the nicest frontages along 169<sup>th</sup> Street. In some locations along its property line, however, the fencing is in need of repair. Improvements to the property should include a variety of additional landscaping along 169<sup>th</sup> Street and perimeter fence repair, primarily along the east property line adjacent to Briar East Shopping Center. If a reuse of the property is considered in the future, senior housing would be very appropriate – centrally located within the neighborhood and close to goods and services.

### *Subarea 3:*

## ***SOUTH of the BORMAN EXPRESSWAY***

Subarea 3 encompasses the southernmost portion of the Hessville neighborhood and includes a mix of distinct uses and properties generally bounded by the Borman Expressway (80/94) on the north, the Little Calumet River on the south, the Conrail railroad right-of-way on the west, and Cline Avenue on the east. The eastern and southern boundaries of the subarea are coterminous with those of the City of Hammond as a whole.

Convenient access to the Borman Expressway and an excellent regional location attract and reinforce a variety of uses within the subarea, including light industrial businesses, hotel/motel and commercial services, and regional features and amenities (Carlson Oxbow Nature Park, the Little Calumet River, and the Lake County Interstate Visitors Information Center). Juxtaposed within this mix of business and regional uses is a large multi-family rental residential complex.

While several of the existing uses within the subarea have been recently developed or established, several opportunities remain for expanding upon and enhancing the active business and regional base at this City entryway. In order to achieve these key economic development goals, land-use recommendations for the subarea include: new development of vacant, undeveloped, or under-developed sites; public infrastructure and image-enhancing improvements; and rehabilitation and/or redevelopment of private property for new uses.

### ***PLANNING INFLUENCES***

The factors that will influence opportunities for improvement and development in the Area South of the Borman Expressway include a) existing land-use, b) sites, buildings, and parking, c) zoning, d) access and circulation, and e) appearance and character. Planning influences are highlighted in Figure 22.

- ***Existing Land-Use.*** Subarea 3 contains a mix of distinct land-uses. A primary feature of the subarea is the large, contiguous tract of land dedicated to and for a concentration of light industrial and employment uses. The established Kennedy Industrial Park contains a variety of light industrial, wholesale, warehousing, distribution and office uses exhibited by nearly two dozen active businesses. Adjacent to the established industrial park is the new and developing Krosan Interstate Business Park site (approximately 40 acres) which includes 200,000 square feet of new warehouse, distribution, and/or office space as well as site area for another 200,000 square feet of space. Several billboards are located along the industrial property frontage facing the Borman Expressway.

Given the convenient interstate access and highway visibility, the area contains a number of commercial services, including hotels, motels, and restaurants. Directly west of Kennedy Avenue is a new cluster of hotels and restaurants that includes Wendy's Restaurant, Cracker Barrel Restaurant, Marriott Residence Inn, Courtyard Inn by Marriott, and Fairfield Inn. Directly west of Cline Avenue is a cluster of older

commercial service uses that includes Holiday Inn, Motel 6, and Super 8 Motel as well as two vacant franchise restaurants and a nearby adult use club in the Kennedy Industrial Park.

Several regional features serve as important neighborhood assets. The Lake County Interstate Visitors Information Center opened in 1999 and provides a variety of visitor, tourism, business, and rest stop services and amenities. Carlson Oxbow Park which is owned and operated by the City of Hammond was dedicated in 1998 as an environmentally significant wetland area and low-impact nature park that offers hiking, boardwalks, fishing piers, and "nature/wildlife watching." The Little Calumet River runs along the southern portion of the neighborhood and provides recreational opportunities as well as links to neighboring communities and other natural/recreational areas of the region.

The only residential use located within the subarea is the large River Park Apartment complex east of Kennedy that consists of twenty-five two-story multi-family buildings containing approximately 720 housing units as studio, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom apartments.

In addition to the Lake County Interstate Visitors Information Center, public uses include a City of Hammond pumping station and a laboratory office of the State of Indiana Department of Transportation for the duration of the interstate construction project.

Several vacant sites and structures are located east of Kennedy Avenue.

- **Sites, Buildings and Parking.** The structural condition of most buildings within the subarea ranges from fair to good. While few buildings are characterized by major deficiencies, many structures would benefit from minor maintenance and repair. A few occupied and vacant structures are characterized by more severe condition problems. All uses include off-street surface parking.

The public and commercial service buildings/sites west of Kennedy Avenue are recent developments in sound condition and are arranged as a succession of individual sites along a frontage road. The grouping of occupied commercial service buildings just west of Cline Avenue are older and generally require some minor maintenance and repair as well as upgraded landscaping and site treatments.

The Kennedy Industrial Park consists of approximately 20 buildings that vary in size and building material for generally single-tenant users but accommodate a few multi-tenant arrangements as well. The buildings were developed on a parcel-by-parcel basis and function as individual sites without coordination for parking or loading and service areas. While some buildings are in good condition and/or are constructed of masonry material, most are characterized by metal panel construction with varying degrees of deterioration and deferred maintenance. Off-street parking areas are generally located in front or to the side of each building and in many cases require resurfacing and repair. Few sidewalks or pathways serve pedestrians within or between properties. The Krosan Interstate Business Park currently consists of two newly constructed masonry buildings serving multi-tenant users with employee and visitor parking in front, side and rear areas.

The River Park Apartment complex consists of 25 two-story multi-family brick residential buildings with accessory surface parking and interior pedestrian paths. While the complex includes some on-site landscaping, play equipment and recreation features, it lacks sufficient open space and contemporary site amenities relative to the large number of residential units. Building exteriors, sites and common areas exhibit accumulating maintenance needs.

The parking area and site features of Carlson Oxbow Park are in sound condition.

- **Zoning.** The mix of land-uses south of the Borman Expressway reflects four distinct zoning classifications for industrial, commercial, residential, and open space uses.

The commercial and industrial areas east of the City's pumping station are zoned *I-1: Light Industrial* (one property at the eastern boundary is zoned *C-4: General Commercial*); the commercial service area west of Kennedy Avenue as well as the vacant parcel directly east of Kennedy are zoned *C-4: General Commercial*.

According to the Hammond Zoning Ordinance, *C-4* is the broadest commercial zoning category and is intended to serve larger-lot, free-standing commercial activities that typically entail little comparison shopping, require automobile access, and may not be compatible with other commercial or residential uses. The *C-4* district generally incorporates the permitted uses of all other commercial districts (including retail and service businesses, professional and business services, commercial recreation, hotels, office, restaurants, governmental functions, etc.) and adds the following uses: drive-in fast food restaurants, automobile sales and service, building materials sales, contractors, food processing and distribution, rental equipment, material handling, and equipment sales and service. Conditional uses include animal care, small laundries and packaging services, billboards and arcades. Buildings may not occupy more than 50% of the total site area and must be no taller than 40 feet, or three stories.

The *I-1* district is intended to provide sites for heavy commercial, light industrial and other employment uses that do not pose serious incompatibilities with other kinds of adjacent land-use. Truck traffic and loading operations are characteristic of these uses, but storage and operations must be located within completely enclosed buildings. Uses permitted within *I-1* include cleaners/laundries, repair services, contractors, warehousing, wholesaling, material handling and equipment, food processing, assembly and packaging, grinding/milling and production, and billboards. Conditional uses include outside materials storage and permitted uses in the City's heavy industrial district (*I-2: Manufacturing*). Buildings may not occupy more than 50 percent of the lot and must be no taller than 35 feet (or up to 65 feet with additional yard requirements); open storage must be screened by a fence of at least 8 feet; and parking must be located at least 40 feet from the front lot line of a property.

The River Park Apartments are zoned *R-3: Medium-Density Residential*. Permitted uses in the *R-3* district include single-family, two-family, and multi-family residential dwelling units. The intent of the district is to permit residential development in a manner consistent with creating a medium-density living environment. Conditional

uses include schools, churches, some community and public uses, professional offices, some retail and service uses, group homes, and mobile homes.

Carlson Oxbow Park, the pumping station site, and some areas along the banks of the Little Calumet River are zoned *S-1: Institutional and Open Space*. Uses allowed in the *S-1* district include parks, recreational areas and open spaces, schools, playgrounds, cemeteries, and certain public buildings.

- **Access and Circulation.** The Borman Expressway and Kennedy and Cline Avenues (north/south principal arterials) provide convenient regional access to the subarea, which is critical to the primarily industrial, commercial service, and business and recreation traveler destination uses of the subarea.

Corinne Drive is a local street in good condition that functions exclusively as an access road for the hotels and commercial uses west of Kennedy Avenue.

The primary east-west frontage road for the uses east of Kennedy Avenue begins as 179<sup>th</sup> Street at Kennedy Avenue, becomes 177<sup>th</sup> Drive, then 177<sup>th</sup> Street, and ultimately returns to 179<sup>th</sup> Street as the road proceeds in a northeasterly then southeasterly direction from Kennedy Avenue to Cline Avenue. This street is in serious disrepair, particularly east of the River Park Apartments, and requires significant reconstruction and resurfacing to safely and efficiently provide for all traffic, including truck traffic servicing industrial uses and visitors to Carlson Oxbow Park or local hotels.

Local streets provide access and interior circulation for the River Park Apartments (178<sup>th</sup> Place and Randy Drive), and for the Kennedy Industrial Park (Nevada and New Jersey Avenues). Similar to 177<sup>th</sup>/179<sup>th</sup> Street, Nevada and New Jersey Avenues require significant repair and resurfacing. Portions of the 177<sup>th</sup>/179<sup>th</sup> Street right-of-way have been modestly improved as part of the installation and upgrade of water lines to the Town of Griffith.

- **Appearance and Character.** Due to the variety of land-uses and the combination of new and older developments, the overall appearance and character of the subarea is inconsistent.

New developments are critical factors that promote this area as a regional business hub as well as a destination location for travelers and visitors. The Lake County Interstate Visitors Information Center is a visual focal point with distinctive architecture and site treatments and serves as an anchor for the new hotel and restaurant cluster west of Kennedy Avenue. On-going maintenance of the area is critical to showcasing this location as an entryway to Hessville and to Hammond. Upkeep and maintenance of the soundwall and expressway embankment as well as attentive maintenance for surrounding water features and young landscaping are important strategies for sustaining the attractive appearance of this area.

Other new developments also convey activity, investment and interest in the area. The quality building materials and site design details of the new and developing Krosan Interstate Business Park communicate contemporary features, appeal and convenience for business. The identity signage, boardwalks and landscaping

treatments of the Carlson Oxbow Nature Park are also attractive, superior examples of site enhancements within the subarea. Enhancing the Nature Park's connectivity to the regional Little Calumet River corridor with attentive maintenance and development of bike-hike trails should be key strategies for promoting Hammond's link at Hessville to other natural area amenities of the Lake County region.

In contrast to the newer developments, older buildings of the subarea have a generally dated appearance and would benefit from building and site improvements. Kennedy Industrial Park faces challenges in achieving comprehensive improvements related to parking, pedestrian access, landscaping and signage due to diversity of property and business ownership. The River Park Apartment complex, however, is under single ownership and generally would have more potential for achieving unified and comprehensive exterior, landscaping and overall site appearance improvements and/or more significant rehabilitation or redevelopment.

Other visual features of the subarea relate to the practicalities and impacts of the Borman Expressway including soundwalls, embankments, and the permitted use of billboards and highway-visible signage.

### **IMPROVEMENT and DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES**

The Area South of the Borman Expressway should continue to be promoted and upgraded as an excellent location for a variety of business and destination uses supporting the Hessville Neighborhood and the City of Hammond. The primary focus of the subarea should be consistent and productive employment uses as well as commercial services and other features that satisfy and appeal to recreational and business travelers. Street right-of-way and public infrastructure should be significantly improved to safely and efficiently provide for automobiles, trucks, bicycles and pedestrians as appropriate. The overall appearance of the subarea should be enhanced to present an appealing image of Hammond at its Hessville entryway.

Improvement and development recommendations for the Area South of the Borman Expressway are described below and highlighted in Figure 22. Recommendations relate to: a) land-use; b) sites, buildings, and parking; and c) circulation, streets and streetscape. Potential development and redevelopment sites within the subarea are discussed in a following section and in Figure 22.

#### **Land-use:**

- The Area South of the Borman Expressway should continue to support a wide range of light industrial, heavy commercial, office, hotel/motel, restaurant and other automobile or highway-oriented commercial service uses. Billboards should be carefully monitored and considered for potential reclassification to a conditional use or other zoning techniques that would limit billboards.
- The commercial properties clustered at Cline Avenue and east of the Kennedy Industrial Park should continue to serve as and be rehabilitated or redeveloped for commercial service or office uses. With the exception of one property, this area is currently zoned I-1: *Light Industrial*. A C-4: *General Commercial* classification should

be considered for this area in order to be consistent with existing land-uses and the zoning of the similar area west of Kennedy Avenue.

- The area comprised of the existing Kennedy Industrial Park and the new and developing Krosan Interstate Business Park should continue to serve and develop as a variety of warehouse, wholesale, office, distribution, equipment repair, auto-related services and other light industrial and heavy commercial uses. New development, rehabilitation and redevelopment should be accomplished to support these types of uses. In general, this section of the subarea should be considered an employment center of the neighborhood and City.
- The commercial area west of Kennedy Avenue is a newly built out service and destination location for the local and neighboring communities, regional visitors, and business and recreational travelers. The commercial service and regional orientation of uses at this location should continue and be sustained by on-going maintenance of infrastructure and site amenities.
- The vacant commercial parcel east of Kennedy Avenue and portions or all of the River Park Apartment complex should be considered for redevelopment to commercial service and office uses that complement the existing and potential regional destination and employment uses of the subarea. Due to the traffic levels of the Borman Expressway and Kennedy Avenue, intensity and proximity of industrial uses, physical constraints of natural, roadway, and political boundaries, and the physical isolation from other residential areas, residential uses are generally not appropriate in the subarea. Open space and recreational uses would also be appropriate for portions of the site that are nearest in adjacency to the Little Calumet River and Carlson Oxbow Park. A combination of C-4: General Commercial and S-1: Institutional Open Space should be considered for these sites.
- Carlson Oxbow Park and the Little Calumet River basin should continue to be protected with appropriate buffers to adjacent land-uses. Expanded recreational uses along the Little Calumet River should be pursued consistent with the current levee and floodwall construction project. Zoning of any levee and floodwall easements should reflect an S-1: Institutional and Open Space classification.

### **Existing Sites and Buildings:**

- The commercial properties west of Kennedy Avenue are generally of new or recent construction and in sound condition. Attentive maintenance to infrastructure, site amenities, façade features and natural areas should be on-going and well-monitored.
- The occupied commercial properties near Cline Avenue are in generally sound condition, but show some deferred maintenance and only modest site features. Appearance improvements for these buildings should focus on building facades, signage, landscaping, and parking area improvements. Vacant buildings should be reused or removed for new development.
- Existing industrial buildings include buildings in sound condition as well as several buildings that show signs of deterioration, obsolescence and overall deferred maintenance. All deficient buildings should be repaired and rehabilitated as required.



In some cases, buildings should be removed to permit new development of upgraded building materials and improved orientations of loading/service areas, parking and yards. Façade improvements, landscaping of front yards, coordination of parking and vehicle and/or pedestrian access points, screening of storage areas, installation of accent and/or safety lighting, improved and coordinated signage, and other design features should be encouraged and/or enforced. Entryway features, including identity and directory signage should be installed at the main access points from 179<sup>th</sup> Street.

- The River Park Apartment complex consists of twenty-five two-story brick buildings that house approximately 720 residential units. The buildings exhibit varying degrees of exterior deterioration as well as various and chronic property standards problems related to interior and common area spaces. The limited landscaping and site amenities of the complex are in fair condition and opportunities for significant improvements are constrained by the lack of available open space within the complex. All deficient buildings should be repaired and rehabilitated as required. Some buildings should be considered for removal to allow for strategic and creative additions of site and open space amenities. As an alternative, the site should be considered for redevelopment as a planned development for commercial service and office uses. Design improvements to all street frontage (including landscaping, screening, and access), buffers and/or opportunities for connectivity to natural features should be encouraged.
- All sites within the subarea are served by adjacent accessory surface parking. Appropriately, no on-street parking exists within the subarea. Most commercial and residential parking areas are in good condition, but several parking areas—particularly those serving businesses within the Kennedy Industrial Park—are characterized by cracked or deteriorating surfaces, holes or depressions, poor drainage, and general disrepair. Existing lots should be repaired, resurfaced and improved where necessary. Consolidation of lots, especially for adjacent small single users, should be considered in the course of redevelopment of any properties. Where possible, the appearance of all parking areas should be monitored and improved with re-stripping, lighting, screening and buffering, interior landscaped islands and landscaping strips or decorative fencing around the periphery of lots.
- Carlson Oxbow Park and the Little Calumet River area should continue to be protected and conserved by providing appropriate buffers from neighboring land-uses as well as on-going monitoring and surveillance. Public safety features such as accent/safety lighting and fencing should be considered for these areas especially as additional bike/hike trails or recreational features are installed. Litter and fly dumping should be curtailed by securing access at any "hot spots".

### **New Development:**

- Several opportunities for new light industrial, office and/or commercial development south of the Borman Expressway include vacant parcels, vacant buildings, and marginal or under-utilized properties. Specific redevelopment sites are highlighted in a following subsection and in Figure 22.

- Within the Kennedy Industrial Park, the consolidation and combination of several adjacent single-user properties should be encouraged in order to create more attractive redevelopment sites for contemporary light industrial and heavy commercial uses.
- The redevelopment of the vacant commercial site at Kennedy Avenue and 179<sup>th</sup> Street should be considered as a commercial planned development, especially if combined with all or a portion of the River Park Apartment property.
- All new development should reflect the desired character and appearance of the Hessville Neighborhood and contribute to strengthening the subarea as an employment, commercial service, and destination area.

### ***Circulation, Streets and Streetscape:***

- The primary access points to the subarea are from the principal arterials, Kennedy and Cline Avenues. Circulation within the subarea is achieved primarily by local streets that function as access or frontage roads to various properties. All streets and access points should be in safe, convenient and serviceable condition for automobiles, trucks, bicycles, and/or pedestrians as appropriate.
- The most significant infrastructure issue facing the subarea is the deteriorated condition of the streets serving the properties east of Kennedy Avenue—particularly east of the River Park Apartments. Significant improvements to 177<sup>th</sup>/179<sup>th</sup> Street and Nevada and New Jersey Avenues should be undertaken to include reconstruction/resurfacing, lighting, landscaping, and construction of sidewalks, curbs and gutters as appropriate. Turning angles at intersections and access driveways should be designed to adequately and efficiently accommodate truck traffic.
- If sufficient parcels of the Kennedy Avenue Industrial Park are assembled for redevelopment, improvements to the interior access and circulation pattern should be considered. Reducing curb cuts, coordinating access drives, consolidating loading, parking and service areas, and installing clear pedestrian pathways to primary entryways and between buildings (if appropriate) should be prioritized.
- The redevelopment of the River Park Apartments and the adjacent vacant commercial site to the south as a commercial planned development should include the consideration of the reconfiguration of 178<sup>th</sup> Place and/or Randy Drive to efficiently accommodate the new uses.
- Due to the primarily commercial and industrial land-use pattern of the subarea, automobiles, trucks and buses constitute most of the traffic. However, some pedestrian and bicycle traffic does occur within individual properties of an activity area (e.g. between properties within the Kennedy Industrial Park) or between activity areas (e.g. River Park Apartments to Carlson Oxbow Park). Pedestrian and bicycle path infrastructure, access and safety should be improved for these informal, yet established, routes, including the completion of proposed bike/hike trails along the Little Calumet River.

- In conjunction with significant improvements to the right-of-way infrastructure of 177<sup>th</sup>/179<sup>th</sup> Street, streetscape improvements should encompass identity and guiding features. Gateway design elements at Kennedy and Cline Avenues should include an identity sign for the area as well as trees, flowers, shrubs, accent lighting, or perhaps a sculptural element.
- Any bus waiting and drop off area should be clearly signed, paved and improved with seating, lighting, and perhaps a covered area.
- Guiding features or directory/identity signage should be located at the primary entrance to each key activity area, particularly at the intersections of both Nevada and New Jersey Avenues at 179<sup>th</sup> Street.
- Once installed, it is important that all streetscape facilities and features be adequately and attractively maintained. Trees and landscaping should be pruned, trimmed and upgraded on a regular basis and adequate irrigation should be provided. Damaged or defective facilities or features should be repaired or replaced as required.

### **POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENT and DEVELOPMENT SITES**

Given the vacant parcels, vacant buildings and/or properties susceptible to change due to deterioration or obsolescence, several opportunities for development of new light industrial and commercial service uses exist in the Area South of the Borman Expressway. The undertaking of the regional Little Calumet River Flood Control and Recreation Project also presents opportunities for expanding or enhancing recreational amenities and development potential of properties along or near the Little Calumet River.

Potential improvement and development sites south of the Borman Expressway include vacant land and structures; deteriorating, marginal or under-utilized properties; and open space or recreation opportunities along the Little Calumet River. More specifically, and highlighted in Figure 22, the sites include the following:

- **Vacant Buildings.** Two vacant buildings located near Cline Avenue, previously occupied by franchise restaurants, should be redeveloped for commercial service or office uses to complement the nearby hotel/motel cluster. Rehabilitation, reuse, or redevelopment of these properties for restaurant and commercial service uses has strong potential given the growing employment and destination features of the area.
- **Krosan Interstate Business Park (vacant property).** Hessville has a unique asset in the approximately 18-acres of prime undeveloped land zoned for light industrial and adjacent to the established Kennedy Industrial Park with natural buffers to the south and west. The property is part of what is planned as the new and developing Krosan Interstate Business Park which is currently anchored by two new 100,000 square foot multi-tenant masonry buildings. The vacant site will accommodate 200,000 square feet of space for office/warehouse/distribution uses and should be developed under a master site plan to provide for such features as coordinated access, interior circulation, parking, signage, architectural detail, lighting, loading/servicing, landscaping, and buffers.

- **Kennedy Industrial Park.** Several improvement and development sites are located within the Kennedy Industrial Park. A few vacant or under-utilized parcels that are currently inaccessible have potential for development especially if combined with adjacent properties for new development. Consolidating adjacent properties allows for greater redevelopment opportunities and establishes sites that are more accommodating for contemporary business needs. Properties in need of major improvements should be targeted for parcel consolidation and redevelopment to accomplish new construction with upgraded building materials, consolidation and reorientation of parking areas, coordinated access/service/loading areas, installation of sidewalks or pedestrian pathways, unified signage and architectural design features, screening, landscaping and buffers.

In addition to redevelopment, many properties occupied by active, viable businesses would benefit from either building and/or site improvements. In general, all of the properties should be improved or upgraded. Functional improvements, such as resurfacing and repair of access drives, pedestrian pathways, and parking areas as well as aesthetic improvements, such as new landscaping, signage, accent/safety lighting, and improved screening, are required of most properties.

Other improvements that relate to the Industrial Park as a whole include entry and design features at both Nevada and New Jersey Avenues to include directory/identity signage, landscaping, and accent lighting. Street repair and resurfacing is also required for both Nevada and New Jersey Avenues in combination with the more significant need of repairing, resurfacing and installing curbs and gutters along 177<sup>th</sup>/179<sup>th</sup> Street.

- **Hotel/Motel Cluster at Cline Avenue.** The hotel and two motels grouped near Cline Avenue function as a traveler and visitor destination area and should convey and promote an attractive image of Hessville as visitors approach from the south at Cline Avenue and from the west along 179<sup>th</sup> Street. All buildings and sites should undertake façade, landscaping, and/or parking area improvements. Unifying elements to the frontage along 179<sup>th</sup> Street should be considered, including landscaping, decorative fencing, accent lighting, and directory signage in order create a distinct visual transition and identity from the industrial area to the west (particularly if one or more new restaurants or complementary commercial service uses are developed on the currently vacant parcels).
- **River Park Apartment Complex/Vacant Commercial Property.** The River Park Apartment complex occupies a prominent and highly visible location within the subarea, serving as the land-use feature that greets visitors to Carlson Oxbow Park, the Little Calumet River area, and employment and hotel uses to the east. In general, the density and limited open space of the site have resulted in intense use of buildings and properties and consequent deterioration of building features and common areas. The complex is also adjacent to a vacant commercial site at the entry to the subarea from Kennedy Avenue. The opportunity for combining the vacant parcel with some or all of the parcels of the River Park Apartment complex should be considered in order to redevelop this convenient interchange "quadrant" for a destination visitor or commercial use and alleviate the constrained site conditions of

#### *Subarea 4:*

### **GIBSON WOODS/MICHIGAN STREET CORRIDOR**

Subarea 4, Gibson Woods/Michigan Street Corridor, encompasses the industrial properties and open lands in the northern portion of the neighborhood. It is bounded on the south by the Gibson Woods Nature Preserve, on the north by the Grand Calumet River, on the west by Kennedy Avenue and on the east by Cline Avenue. Three railroad corridors and the Interstate 90 Toll Road bisect the subarea in an east-west direction. It contains numerous wetlands and environmentally sensitive open spaces as well as some environmentally contaminated land.

While the Gibson Woods/Michigan Street Corridor contains several heavy industrial uses, including a truck/rail freight transfer facility and a tank farm, it is less intensely developed than the other three subareas included in this plan. The subarea is characterized by environmental issues, access limitations and lack of infrastructure, yet it does have potential for new industrial, recreational and open space development in the future.

#### **PLANNING INFLUENCES**

The factors that will influence opportunities for improvement and development in the area north of Gibson Woods/Michigan Street Corridor include a) existing land-use, b) zoning, c) access and circulation, and d) appearance and character. Planning influences are highlighted in Figure 23.

- **Existing Land-Use.** Subarea 4 contains numerous environmentally significant lands. There are four state-registered nature preserves in this area: Gibson Woods Nature Preserve, Cline Avenue Nature Preserve, Seidner Dune and Swale Nature Preserve and Tolleston Ridge Nature Preserve. In addition, there are other areas which are designated "sensitive" in the 1998-2002 Lake County Parks and Recreation Open Space Master Plan Update. "Sensitive" areas are areas containing significant environmental features. They include the Beemsterboer property, the DuPont Tract, the Halstab site, the Conrail site, the Grand Calumet River Tern site, the Cline Avenue Dune and Swale site, and the Tolleston Ridge Addition. These properties are both privately and publicly held. The Lake County Parks and Recreation Board owns the Gibson Woods and Tolleston Ridge Nature Preserves. The Shirley Heinze Environmental Fund owns the Seidner Dune and Swale Nature Preserve and it also has a small conservation easement on the east end of privately held property, adjacent to Gibson Woods. The Indiana Department of Natural Resources owns the Cline Avenue Nature Preserve. The Nature Conservancy owns the Tolleston Ridge Addition, located to the south of the Tolleston Ridge Nature Preserve. The Cline Avenue Dune and Swale site, the DuPont Tract, the Beemsterboer property, the Halstab property, the Conrail site, and the Grand Calumet River Tern Site are privately held properties.

A portion of the Grand Calumet River lies within the northern portion of Subarea 4. The Grand Calumet River originates on the east side of Gary. It meanders through

Gary, East Chicago, and Hammond into Illinois where it joins the Little Calumet River approximately five miles west of the Illinois-Indiana border to form the Calumet River. The Calumet River flows into Lake Calumet and, ultimately, Lake Michigan. The river is about 16 miles long and has a basin area of approximately 62 square miles. The river itself has been moved several times to accommodate industrial development. Industry has filled or drained the wetlands and leveled the dunes along the river, using steel slag to fill low areas and the lakefront. The river is heavily polluted as a result of heavy industry discharging wastewater and urban run-off into the river over a period of many years. From Indianapolis Boulevard to Gary, the natural flow of the river was reversed to an eastward flow.

Several active industrial and commercial land-uses are also located within the Gibson Woods/Michigan Street Corridor, including: AGA Gas, Central Rent-a-Crane, Creviston Trucking, Halstab, Explorer Pipeline, Dana Transport, Mobil Oil, Lake States Trucking, JusTrux, American Fabrication, Savage Industries, and Resco Products, Inc. In addition, the City of Hammond owns a 15-acre parcel that the Police Department utilizes as a firing range.

Three railroads bisect Subarea 4 from east to west. The Chicago South Shore and South Bend Railroad parallels Interstate 90 at the north end of the subarea. The former Michigan Central Railroad and the New York Central Railroad, now under ownership by the Norfolk Southern Railway, run parallel to each other at the southern end of the area. The Gibson Transfer facility, a roadway located between the latter two railroads, allows for the transfer of freight between truck and rail.

- **Zoning.** The majority of Subarea 4 is zoned I-2: *Manufacturing*. There is a small amount of C-4: *General Commercial* along Kennedy Avenue just north of Gibson Place, and small areas of S-1: *Institutional and Open Space* in the Cline Avenue/Michigan Street interchange area and to the west of Kennedy Avenue. The permitted uses in the I-2: *Manufacturing* district include bulk storage, manufacturing, construction material processing/handling, laundries, warehousing, and wholesaling. Other uses such as sand and gravel quarrying, scrap processing/storage, explosive/flammable material storage and truck terminals may be allowed conditionally. Buildings typically may not occupy more than 50% of the total site area and must not be taller than 35 feet.

The commercial properties on Kennedy Avenue just north of Gibson Place and south of the former Michigan Central Railroad tracks are zoned C-4: *General Commercial*. The C-4 district permits retail and service businesses, professional services, governmental functions, automobile sales and services, building materials sales, contractors, food processing and distribution, rental equipment, and material handling equipment sales and services. Conditional uses include animal care and boarding, small laundries and packaging services, billboards and arcades. Buildings may not occupy more than 50% of the total site area and must not be taller than 40 feet or three stories.

Uses allowed in the S-1: *Institutional and Open Space* category include parks, recreational areas and open spaces, schools, playgrounds, cemeteries and certain public buildings.

All nature preserves in the area, including Gibson Woods, are currently zoned I-2: *Manufacturing*.

- **Access and Circulation.** Roadway access and circulation within the Gibson Woods/Michigan Street Corridor is very poor and inhibits opportunities for new development. Kennedy Avenue serves as the western boundary of the subarea. The roadway becomes grade separated in order to span over the former Michigan Central Railroad and the New York Central Railroad with a bridge structure. North of the railroads, Kennedy Avenue slopes down to grade and passes under Interstate 90. Cline Avenue, a restricted access arterial serves as the eastern boundary of the subarea. An interchange is located at U.S. Route 20/Michigan Street. The three railroads and Interstate 90 are significant east-west physical barriers prohibiting ease of movement within the subarea.

South of the former New York Central Railroad tracks, a north-south frontage road parallels Kennedy Avenue and provides access to the businesses in the southwest quadrant of the subarea, including the JusTrux Company and Creviston Trucking. Beyond these businesses, the frontage road turns in an east-west direction, crosses the former Michigan Central Railroad tracks, and then runs between the Michigan Central and New York Central railroad tracks to its dead-end just before Cline Avenue. The road functions as the Gibson Transfer Facility, providing an area for freight transfer between truck and rail, as well as access to Lake States Trucking and Salvage Industries.

Access to the area between the New York Central Railroad and U.S. Route 20/Michigan Street is directly off of Kennedy Avenue. This area includes the Central Rent-a-Crane business, the Dana Transport Company and the City of Hammond Sanitary District pumping station.

U.S. Route 20/Michigan Street is an east-west collector road that is grade separated over Kennedy Avenue just south of Interstate 90. Access onto U.S. Route 20 from Kennedy Avenue is via a ramp. U.S. Route 20/Michigan Street is a two-lane roadway linking Kennedy Avenue and Cline Avenue, with an interchange at Cline Avenue. Access from this road is currently provided to the Halstab Company and the AGA Gas Company on the south side and the Explorer Pipeline to the north. Improvements to Michigan Street including dedicated right and left turn lanes would provide easier and safer access to adjacent properties.

Access from Kennedy Avenue to property located between Interstate 90 and the Grand Calumet River, is provided by an east-west frontage road which parallels the Chicago South Shore and South Bend Railroad tracks. The frontage road dead-ends at the area known as the Seidner Dune and Swale Nature Preserve. A gate prohibits vehicular access into the Seidner Dune and Swale site, and foot or bike access can only be made via a dirt path.

Rail access is critical to the development of industrial land-uses. The land contiguous to the Gibson Transfer Facility area would benefit from the proximity to two freight lines, the former Michigan Central Railroad and the former New York Central



Railroad. The proximity to the transfer facility is also an enhancement for development of parcels in this area.

- **Appearance and Character.** The Gibson Woods/Michigan Street Corridor does not have a unified visual image and character. It has the appearance of a heavy industrial area with scattered unprotected and undeveloped lands. Open spaces are relatively unkempt, with limited signage or protection. Many improvements could be made to unify the industrial land-uses into an "industrial corridor." Improvements should also be made to better define and link environmentally significant parcels that have potential for passive recreation.

### **IMPROVEMENT and DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES**

Subarea 4 has the potential for new industrial, recreational and open space development in the future. Although development of the majority of the area is hampered by significant wetlands, contaminated soils, and poor access, future development can be feasible in certain targeted areas.

Improvement and development recommendations for the Gibson Woods/Michigan Street Corridor are described below and highlighted in Figure 23. Recommendations relate to: a) land-use, b) new development opportunities, and c) traffic circulation.

#### **Land-Use:**

- Except for some commercial zoning along Kennedy Avenue and institutional and open space zoning at the Cline Avenue/Michigan Street interchange, the area is zoned *I-2: Manufacturing*. This zoning designation does not currently recognize those areas that are significant natural areas, including the four nature preserves in the area. The zoning for the four nature preserves, as well as other properties that should be maintained for passive recreational use, should be reclassified to *S-1: Institutional and Open Space* in order to more appropriately preserve and enhance these areas as permanent environmental properties.
- The basic land-use pattern of the area is manufacturing and should remain as such. The City should continue to promote development of those areas which are appropriate for industrial development. Revisions in the roadway network to provide easier access into the sites, as well as wetland mitigation plans need to be components of any future development.
- Commercial reuse or redevelopment of the existing commercial buildings along Kennedy Avenue on the south end of the subarea should be promoted to achieve a higher and better use of these properties. This area serves as a northern gateway to the Hessville Neighborhood and improvements at this location would complement the improvements recommended for the Kennedy Avenue corridor, as described in Subarea 1.

### ***New Development:***

- Several opportunities for new industrial development exist within Subarea 4. The areas most appropriate for redevelopment are those sites with convenient access from either Kennedy Avenue or Michigan Street. Potential development sites are highlighted in Figure 23 and in the next subsection.
- A 15-acre parcel of land on the Shell Oil Company property, located south of Michigan Street just east of the former Hammond Dump site, is targeted for redevelopment per the Gary-Hammond-East Chicago Empowerment Zone Map. The designation of this property in an empowerment zone should help promote business development and provide new job opportunities for neighborhood residents. The employer is eligible for a federal empowerment zone tax credit. The 15-acre site should continue to be promoted as viable, developable property.
- The four state nature preserves and other significant natural areas should be enhanced and protected. Appropriate fencing, signage, and surveillance would help curtail the ongoing degradation of these sites. Reclassification of the zoning for these parcels to *S-1: Institutional and Open Space* should be undertaken by the City.
- The Grand Calumet River corridor should be recognized and promoted as a recreational area. Support of the Grand Calumet Task Force Vision Plan, as well as support of the recreational trail proposed by the Hammond Parks Department in the Bikeways Master Plan, is also strongly encouraged as a part of this subarea plan.

### ***Traffic Circulation:***

- Before any significant promotion and development of this subarea can occur, access to and from the various properties must be improved. The existing frontage roads providing access from Kennedy Avenue should be redesigned to provide more appropriate entry into existing and proposed industrial and commercial developments.
- U.S. Route 20/Michigan Street should be upgraded to provide for right and left turn lanes in order to provide safer and more convenient and direct access.

### ***POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENT and DEVELOPMENT SITES***

Due to the vast amount of vacant property in the Gibson Woods/Michigan Street Corridor, and the potential to expand the City's tax base with more industrial and commercial land-uses, there are several parcels in Subarea 4 that could be redeveloped. Also, given the significant natural resources in this area, there are several areas that should be protected as passive recreational areas and natural areas.

Potential improvement and development sites in the area north of Gibson Woods, highlighted in Figure 23, include the following:

- ***Vacant properties.*** There are several vacant properties that have not yet been developed due to significant constraints, including environmental contamination, wetlands, or poor access. Those properties that are most viable for development should be promoted for commercial or industrial purposes.

- **Marginal and/or under-utilized properties.** There are a few buildings and properties which need substantial physical improvements or more intensive development on site. These properties should either be substantially upgraded or replaced with new development.
- **Environmentally significant areas.** There are four nature preserves and several other parcels considered environmentally significant and/or sensitive. In particular, those parcels that are located near the Grand Calumet River Basin and adjacent to other significant environmental areas should be preserved as environmentally sensitive areas.

### **Opportunity Sites:**

Figure 23 highlights as letters "A" through "I" properties that represent potential opportunities for industrial, commercial, and passive recreational uses. As with the other three subareas, the City should continue to review and analyze these sites over the 10-year "horizon" of the *Hessville Neighborhood Plan*. These opportunity sites are described as follows. Note that although the majority of the subarea contains wetlands, it is the objective of this planning process to identify those areas to preserve for passive recreational uses and those areas which make the most sense to develop for industrial and commercial uses. It is not known which wetlands are considered most significant until wetland delineation studies are completed for each site. However, the *Neighborhood Plan* recommends preserving sites already considered "sensitive" by the *Lake County Parks and Recreation Open Space Master Plan Update* and sites adjacent to already environmentally significant parcels. The zoning for these parcels should be reclassified to *S-1: Institutional and Open Space*. Other sites, although containing wetlands, may be recommended for development rather than preservation due to their proximity to established industrial and commercial land-uses and retain their *I-2* zoning classification.

- **Site A** is an under-utilized commercial area on Kennedy Avenue just north of Gibson Place. Access is via a frontage road off Kennedy Avenue. The area is owned by the Hammond Development Corporation and is south of the former Michigan Central Railroad tracks. This is the only part of Subarea 4 zoned for commercial use. The Shirley Heinze Environmental Fund owns a conservation easement for the eastern portion of the site that is adjacent to the Gibson Woods Nature Preserve. Site A occupies a highly visible entryway into the area north of Gibson Woods. The existing properties are under-utilized and the area has a relatively poor overall image and appearance. An attractive new "gateway" feature, a more highly visible entry to Gibson Woods, and commercial redevelopment should all be considered in this location. The Shirley Heinze easement area should be re-zoned to *S-1: Institutional and Open Space*.
- **Site B** encompasses the former Hammond Dump site and is privately owned by the Hammond Land Reclamation Corporation/Hammond Group. It is a closed, capped landfill that is vacant. Wetlands occupy the northern half of the site on land with frontage along U.S. 20/Michigan Street. These wetlands are part of an environmentally sensitive site known as the "Halstab Site." Access to this site, would

most likely be from Michigan Street. There is also potential access via Dump Drive, a road leading from the Kennedy Avenue frontage road. This is an area that has potential for future industrial development. The future use of this site may be limited by the presence of soils unsuitable for certain types of new development. Full development of the site is also limited by the presence of wetlands, the documented siting of the Franklin Ground Squirrel in the vicinity of this area, and the fact that it is considered to be "sensitive" in the *Lake County Parks and Recreation Open Space Master Plan Update*.

- **Site C** includes a 15-acre site owned by the Shell Corporation and a parcel in the Gary-Hammond-East Chicago Empowerment Zone. The site was formerly occupied by a Shell Oil tank farm (the tanks have been removed). Wetlands are located to the north of the site and within the site. Pipelines are present in an east-west direction through the site. Wetlands would need to be mitigated in order to develop a contiguous piece of property. Access would be off of Michigan Street. Emphasis should be placed on promoting appropriate industrial development that would provide new employment opportunities for area residents. This land is currently advertised for sale, as part of a larger 51-acre site.
- **Site D** contains the Tolleston Ridge Nature Preserve and the Tolleston Ridge Addition. The Nature Preserve is owned by the Lake County Parks and Recreation Department and is a protected, state recognized nature preserve. It is a 38-acre site that is fenced; no public access is permitted without authorization. The Tolleston Ridge Addition is an 8.8-acre strip of land, located south of the Nature Preserve, owned by the Nature Conservancy. It contains a high quality savanna/sand mesic plant community. The *1998-2002 Lake County Parks and Recreation Open Space Master Plan Update* considers the Tolleston Ridge Addition a "sensitive site."
- **Site E** is the northwest quadrant of the Cline Avenue/Michigan Street interchange. The property is under the control of multiple owners. American Fabrication is located on site. At the northern end of the site there are two environmentally sensitive areas. The Cline Avenue Nature Preserve is located within the Chicago South Shore and South Bend track loop area, and the Cline Avenue Dune and Swale site, a "sensitive" site per the *Lake County Parks and Recreation Open Space Master Plan Update*, is located just to the south on privately held property. Both of these areas should be appropriately protected with fencing and signage.

Outside the environmentally sensitive area, the land should be developed for commercial or industrial land-uses. Since this area is proximate to the Gary-Chicago Airport, and is located near an interchange, commercial or industrial businesses that would service or benefit from the airport or air travel would be appropriate.

Access to this site is from the frontage road leading from Michigan Street. Traditional interchange development (such as fast food restaurants and gas stations) would probably not be appropriate in this interchange, given its relatively isolated location and the lower traffic volumes on Cline Avenue and U.S. Route 20/Michigan Street.

Wetlands are located along the frontage of Michigan Street, and, if full development is to take place, the wetlands will need to be mitigated.

- **Site F** is a triangular 18-acre site owned by Explorer Pipeline. It has access off of Michigan Street and is adjacent to a tank farm to the east. This site is appropriate for industrial development. However, almost the entire site contains wetlands that would need to be mitigated.
- **Site G** is a privately held 58-acre site which has significant dune and swale environmental features and is designated as "sensitive" in the *Lake County Parks and Recreation Open Space Master Plan Update*. Given its proximity to the south bank of the Grand Calumet River, the portions of the site that are the most pristine should be retained as open space and reclassified to S-1 zoning.
- **Site H** contains the Seidner Dune and Swale Nature Preserve and the Grand Calumet River Tern Site. The Seidner Dune and Swale Nature Preserve is owned by the Shirley Heinze Environmental Fund and is approximately 43 acres in size. It is immediately south of the Grand Calumet River and north of the Chicago South Shore and South Bend (South Shore) Railroad tracks. It is characterized by a series of sandy ridges separated by low wetland areas. Several state endangered species are present on site.

Sharing the site on the west end is the Grand Calumet River Tern Site, a recognized environmental area known for its nesting places for the great egret, the black tern, and the marsh wren. The Tern site straddles the South Shore on both the north and south sides, and also extends outside of the Seidner Dune and Swale Nature Preserve to privately held land on the west. Both lands should be protected from further degradation by appropriate fencing, signage, surveillance, and zoning.

- **Site I** the Grand Calumet River, has been a dumping ground over the last century for wastewater from nearby industries. Industry has also filled or drained adjacent wetlands and leveled adjacent dune areas. The river was moved several times to accommodate industry and it is located in a heavily industrialized area. However, some of the most biologically diverse natural areas in the region are located along the river's banks. The Grand Calumet Task Force is a grassroots organization working to clean up and protect the river and its ecosystem. The *Grand Calumet Task Force Corridor Vision Plan* was the result of a broad-based partnership responsible for planning future uses along the river. Possible future uses along the river corridor might include restaurants, bike paths, walking trails, museums, retail shops and water recreation.

The City of Hammond Parks Department is working with the Grand Calumet Task Force to develop common goals for recreational uses along the river. This subarea plan supports the efforts of the Task Force in cleaning up the area, promoting the area and providing recreational and economic opportunities along the river. Among the issues to consider would be access to the riverfront given the privately held parcels along the riverbank in the Hessville Neighborhood. The preservation of the DuPont Tract on the north side of the river as a significant environmental area and one that currently provides access to the river should be supported.

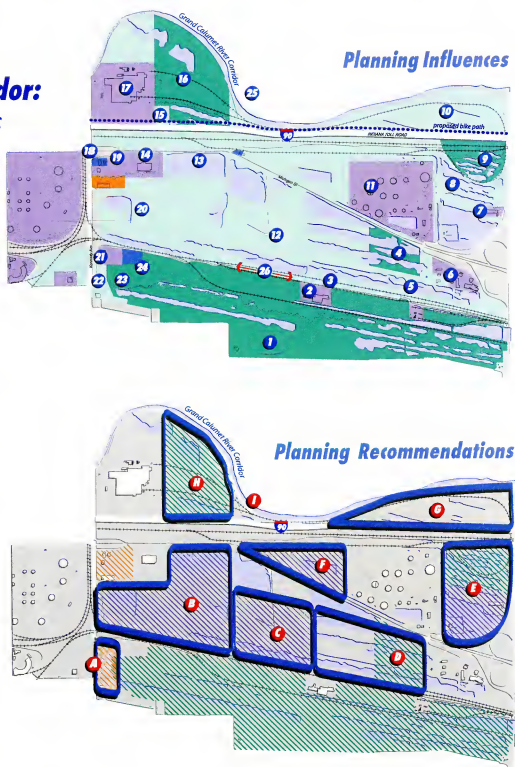
Figure 23

## Gibson Woods/ Michigan Street Corridor: Influences & Recommendations

**G**ibson Woods/Michigan Street Corridor encompasses the industrial properties and open lands in the northern portion of the Hessville Neighborhood. This subarea contains heavy industry and manufacturing land-uses, several viable commercial businesses, four nature preserves, and other environmentally sensitive areas and wetlands.

The Gibson Woods/Michigan Street Corridor is less intensively developed than the other three subareas. While it is characterized by environmental issues, access limitations, and lack of infrastructure, it does have potential for new industrial, recreational and open space development in the future.

Existing features and conditions, as well as opportunities for improvement and development, are highlighted in Figure 23.



### Character of North Subarea:

**A** - Gibson Woods Nature Preserve is an attractive neighborhood focal point and a major regional attraction.

**B** - Several active industrial uses are scattered throughout the subarea, including the Halstab Company.

**C** - Much of the Gibson Woods/Michigan Street Corridor subarea is undeveloped and there are numerous environmentally significant parcels. However, few of these are clearly designated or adequately protected.

**D** - Several large "tank farms," including the Explorer Pipeline, are located within the Gibson Woods/Michigan Street Corridor.

**SECTION 5: Implementation**

***Hessville Neighborhood Plan***  
*Hammond, Indiana*



## **IMPLEMENTATION**

The *Neighborhood Plan* sets forth an agreed-upon “road map” for community improvement and development within the Hessville Neighborhood of the City of Hammond during the next ten to fifteen years. It is the product of considerable effort on the part of the Neighborhood Plan Advisory Committee and City staff.

However, in many ways, the planning process in Hessville has just begun. Formal adoption of the *Neighborhood Plan* will only be one of the first steps, not the last. Without continuing action to implement Plan recommendations, the City’s efforts up to this point will have little lasting impact.

This section presents the recommended *Implementation Action Agenda*, which is intended to help the City organize and initiate the Plan implementation process.

### **OVERVIEW of the ACTION AGENDA**

The Action Agenda, which is summarized in Table 1, highlights the implementation aspects of the Plan’s major improvement and development recommendations. The Action Agenda consists of several components:

1. A listing of the major projects and actions that should be undertaken to maintain, enhance and improve the City in the future;
2. The suggested priority of each project, based upon a 15-year “horizon” and three implementation phases;
3. An indication of the public and private sector responsibilities for initiating and participating in each project; and
4. A suggestion of the funding sources and assistance programs that might be available for implementing key projects.

Each Action Agenda component is briefly described below.

### **Projects and Actions**

The Action Agenda provides a *summary* of the major improvement and development recommendations of the *Neighborhood Plan*. Recommendations are grouped into nine categories: a) administrative actions, b) land-use and development, c) Kennedy Avenue Subarea, d) 169<sup>th</sup> Street/Grand Avenue Subarea, e) Area South of the Borman Expressway Subarea, f) Gibson Woods/Michigan Street Corridor Subarea; g) community facilities, h) transportation and i) other actions and projects.

It should be emphasized that this is only a summary of the recommendations prepared during the planning process. Other sections of the *Neighborhood Plan* provide more detailed descriptions of various policy recommendations.



## **Priority and Schedule**

The *Neighborhood Plan* provides a long-range program for community-wide improvement within Hammond. The Plan cannot be accomplished all at once; projects and actions will have to be scheduled over a period of years.

Consequently, the Action Agenda suggests a 15-year horizon for completion of the Plan, but strongly encourages that the listing of projects and priorities be reviewed and updated periodically.

The Action Agenda suggests three priority phases for project implementation, as described below. However, the implementation schedule should be flexible, and should be modified and updated to reflect changing needs, conditions and preferences.

- **Priority 1** projects should be undertaken within the next five years.
- **Priority 2** projects should be undertaken during the next five to ten years, although some may actually begin immediately.
- **Priority 3** projects should be undertaken during the next ten to fifteen-year period.

However, it should be emphasized that some projects may either move forward or backward, depending on changes in market conditions, funding sources or local priorities.

## **Action Responsibilities**

In order for the *Neighborhood Plan* to be successful, it must be based on a strong partnership between the City, other public agencies, the local business community, various neighborhood groups and organizations, and the private sector.

Key participants in the implementation process should include the following:

- **City of Hammond.** The City must assume the leadership role in implementing the *Neighborhood Plan*. In addition to carrying out many of the public improvement projects called for in the Plan, the City will administer a variety of financial and technical assistance programs available to local residents, businesses and developers. The City should also cooperate with and support other local agencies and organizations, and ensure that all codes, ordinances and enforcement procedures support and complement the *Neighborhood Plan*.
- **Other Participants.** Even though the City will assume the leadership role in Plan implementation, other agencies, organizations and institutions will also participate in many projects. For example, these will include:
  - Local agencies and service districts. The active participation and support of agencies and service districts, such as the Parks and Recreation Board, the Library Board, School City of Hammond, and the Sanitary District, will be essential to the successful implementation of many of the community facility and service recommendations included in the Plan.

- Other governmental and quasi-governmental organizations. Certain projects and actions require the participation and assistance of county, state and federal agencies including the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT), Lake County Parks and Recreation Department, Little Calumet River Basin Development Commission, Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission, etc.
- Hessville Business Association, Hammond Chamber of Commerce, Urban Enterprise Zone Association, and the Hammond Development Corporation. These business organizations can play an important role in marketing and promoting the community, and in organizing improvement and redevelopment efforts within the commercial and business areas. They can also offer financial and technical assistance for certain types of projects, and can help ensure that the needs of the business community are brought to the attention of the City.
- Local institutions and community organizations. Specific schools, community organizations, churches and other institutions should continue to maintain their own properties while conforming to the overall guidelines and objectives of the Plan. Existing institutions might also sponsor special events, activities or improvement projects which will benefit the community as a whole.
- Banks and financial institutions. Local lenders can provide active and direct assistance, particularly with respect to upgrading existing properties and facilitating redevelopment. Lenders can offer special programs for building improvements and repairs, and can also help finance development projects within the various subareas.
- Builders and developers. Private builders and developers should be encouraged to rehabilitate existing buildings as needed and undertake new construction that conforms to the Plan and enhances the overall quality and character of the Hessville community.
- Residents, neighborhood groups, and the community. All residents and neighborhood groups should be encouraged to participate in the on-going planning and implementation process of the *Neighborhood Plan* including monitoring progress, helping to refine strategies, providing feedback, and promoting initiatives of the Plan. Neighborhood groups should serve as an active communication network between residents, businesses, and the City and should be given the opportunity to provide input and voice opinions on major improvement and development decisions within the community.

The Action Agenda indicates the role of the City in initiating and monitoring each project, as well as the other agencies and organizations that might also participate in project implementation.

However, it should be emphasized that this is only a representative listing of major participants; many others may be involved in certain projects and actions.

## **Priority and Schedule**

The *Neighborhood Plan* provides a long-range program for community-wide improvement within Hammond. The Plan cannot be accomplished all at once; projects and actions will have to be scheduled over a period of years.

Consequently, the Action Agenda suggests a 15-year horizon for completion of the Plan, but strongly encourages that the listing of projects and priorities be reviewed and updated periodically.

The Action Agenda suggests three priority phases for project implementation, as described below. However, the implementation schedule should be flexible, and should be modified and updated to reflect changing needs, conditions and preferences.

- **Priority 1** projects should be undertaken within the next five years.
- **Priority 2** projects should be undertaken during the next five to ten years, although some may actually begin immediately.
- **Priority 3** projects should be undertaken during the next ten to fifteen-year period.

However, it should be emphasized that some projects may either move forward or backward, depending on changes in market conditions, funding sources or local priorities.

## **Action Responsibilities**

In order for the *Neighborhood Plan* to be successful, it must be based on a strong partnership between the City, other public agencies, the local business community, various neighborhood groups and organizations, and the private sector.

Key participants in the implementation process should include the following:

- **City of Hammond.** The City must assume the leadership role in implementing the *Neighborhood Plan*. In addition to carrying out many of the public improvement projects called for in the Plan, the City will administer a variety of financial and technical assistance programs available to local residents, businesses and developers. The City should also cooperate with and support other local agencies and organizations, and ensure that all codes, ordinances and enforcement procedures support and complement the *Neighborhood Plan*.
- **Other Participants.** Even though the City will assume the leadership role in Plan implementation, other agencies, organizations and institutions will also participate in many projects. For example, these will include:
  - Local agencies and service districts. The active participation and support of agencies and service districts, such as the Parks and Recreation Board, the Library Board, School City of Hammond, and the Sanitary District, will be essential to the successful implementation of many of the community facility and service recommendations included in the Plan.

- Other governmental and quasi-governmental organizations. Certain projects and actions require the participation and assistance of county, state and federal agencies including the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT), Lake County Parks and Recreation Department, Little Calumet River Basin Development Commission, Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission, etc.
- Hessville Business Association, Hammond Chamber of Commerce, Urban Enterprise Zone Association, and the Hammond Development Corporation. These business organizations can play an important role in marketing and promoting the community, and in organizing improvement and redevelopment efforts within the commercial and business areas. They can also offer financial and technical assistance for certain types of projects, and can help ensure that the needs of the business community are brought to the attention of the City.
- Local institutions and community organizations. Specific schools, community organizations, churches and other institutions should continue to maintain their own properties while conforming to the overall guidelines and objectives of the Plan. Existing institutions might also sponsor special events, activities or improvement projects which will benefit the community as a whole.
- Banks and financial institutions. Local lenders can provide active and direct assistance, particularly with respect to upgrading existing properties and facilitating redevelopment. Lenders can offer special programs for building improvements and repairs, and can also help finance development projects within the various subareas.
- Builders and developers. Private builders and developers should be encouraged to rehabilitate existing buildings as needed and undertake new construction that conforms to the Plan and enhances the overall quality and character of the Hessville community.
- Residents, neighborhood groups, and the community. All residents and neighborhood groups should be encouraged to participate in the on-going planning and implementation process of the *Neighborhood Plan* including monitoring progress, helping to refine strategies, providing feedback, and promoting initiatives of the Plan. Neighborhood groups should serve as an active communication network between residents, businesses, and the City and should be given the opportunity to provide input and voice opinions on major improvement and development decisions within the community.

The Action Agenda indicates the role of the City in initiating and monitoring each project, as well as the other agencies and organizations that might also participate in project implementation.

However, it should be emphasized that this is only a representative listing of major participants; many others may be involved in certain projects and actions.

## ***Funding Sources and Implementation Techniques***

While many of the recommended projects and actions called for in the *Neighborhood Plan* can be implemented through administrative and policy decisions or can be funded through established municipal programs, other projects will require special technical and/or financial assistance.

The Action Agenda identifies several of the local, state and federal resources and programs that might be considered in the implementation of key Plan recommendations.

In general, the City of Hammond provides a variety of financial and technical resources for community development in addition to a full range of municipal services and funding for substantial public infrastructure improvements throughout the community.

The *Neighborhood Plan* generally calls for the continuation and strengthening of the City's proactive role in promoting, coordinating and facilitating desirable new development and redevelopment projects.

For example, the City might offer technical assistance and support to property owners or developers of projects that meet the guidelines and foster the objectives of the *Neighborhood Plan*. In blocks where the City owns land, the City might coordinate with adjacent and nearby property owners to assemble larger, more desirable sites for new development. The City might assist in the preparation of developer "Requests for Proposals," and might assist in the review and evaluation of proposals for key projects.

The City might also consider expanding or enhancing its existing assistance programs, such as the business façade rehabilitation program.

A sampling of techniques for implementing complex improvement and redevelopment projects are briefly described below and are identified in Table 1 as possible resources and tools related to specific projects or actions.

In addition to the funding techniques generally available to municipalities, such as property taxes, bonding, motor fuel tax funds, public utility taxes, hotel/motel taxes, sales tax, and various fees, the City may access a variety of resources to fund projects in Hessville. For example, portions of Hessville are eligible for comprehensive funding, tools and resources such as the Community Development Block Grant, federal empowerment zone, and urban enterprise zone programs which help to fund commercial and industrial district improvements, infrastructure improvements, housing programs (CDBG only) and a variety of economic and community development programs.

Gaming revenues for the Council Districts represented within Hessville and the mayor's discretionary funds are other important sources of funding for primarily infrastructure projects but can be used for other projects including parks and recreation activities, economic development and public safety capital improvements.

A number of local, county, state, and federal matching funds, grants and low-interest loan programs are available to serve specific public policy and public purpose categories. For example, a variety of financial and technical programs related to parks, recreation, open space, natural area conservation, and environmental remediation are administered by the

Indiana Department of Natural Resources and Indiana Department of Environmental Management.

Similarly, funding and resources for transportation infrastructure and enhancement, traffic safety, and congestion mitigation are funded and administered by such public entities as the Indiana Department of Transportation, the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission, and the Federal Highway Administration.

A third category is the variety of programs and resources available for job creation and economic development initiatives, including those managed by the Hammond Mayor's Office of Economic Development, the Indiana Department of Commerce, the Indiana Development Finance Authority, the U.S. Economic Development Administration, and the Lake County Community Economic Development Department.

Some funding sources are generated by adopting special designations for property or properties in a district, corridor or subarea. These tools are generally based on the principle of establishing geographic boundaries for a redevelopment or economic development area for the purposes of accomplishing coordinated, comprehensive and timely improvement projects and programs.

These economic development tools are commonly used to improve and enhance established business districts or neighborhoods. Individually and in combination, these tools provide flexibility for achieving financing and technical assistance for the "hard" and "soft" component strategies of community improvement and development. These district techniques include:

- **Tax Increment Financing (TIF)** - In general, TIF provides for the temporary allocation to redevelopment districts of increased tax proceeds in an allocation area generated by increases in assessed value. TIF permits cities to use increased tax revenues stimulated by redevelopment to pay for the public capital improvements needed to induce the redevelopment. In Indiana, to qualify for TIF, a designated area must either be declared blighted or an economic development area. A blighted area is defined as an area in which normal development and occupancy are undesirable or impossible because of lack of development; cessation of growth; deterioration of improvements; character or occupancy; age; obsolescence; substandard buildings; or other factors that impair values or prevent the normal use or development of property.
- **Special Improvement District (SID)** - Redevelopment Commissions are able to request that the legislative body establish a Special Improvement District for redevelopment purposes. These Districts are to be established according to the procedures set forth in the establishment of TIF Allocation Areas and are to include improvements proposed to be made which will provide special benefits to property owners in the SID. This District permits those taxpayers who directly benefit from an improvement to assess themselves for the improvement.
- **Business Improvement District (BID)** - The Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) are designed to provide a means of funding certain types of economic projects through fees assessed on property within designated BIDs. These districts are established by a three member Economic Improvement Board,

appointed by the legislative body. The majority of the Board members must be property owners in the District.

Other financial and technical resources are available through private sources including programs of local banks and financial institutions and private organizations and foundations such as the Hammond Community Corporation.

A brief annotated list of the potential tools and resources will be included as a component of a companion reference report to the *Neighborhood Plan* which includes a variety of background and reference material pertaining to the background information assembled throughout the Plan process.

## Action Agenda

PROJECT or ACTION	Role of the City of Hammond*	Other Possible Participants	Potential Tools and Resources
<b>ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS:</b> Adopt and use the Neighborhood Plan as a guide and framework for improvement and development within Hessville. Ensure that all local codes and ordinances conform to and support the new Neighborhood Plan. Review and update the Neighborhood Plan on a regular basis. Market and promote the Hessville Plan within Hammond and the Northwest Indiana Region.	<b>Priority 1:</b> Review all future public and private improvement and development proposals for conformance to the Plan; undertake the other projects listed below. <b>Priority 1:</b> Review and update the Zoning Ordinance and map as outlined in the Plan. <b>Priority 1:</b> Establish a process for reviewing and updating the Plan on a periodic basis including participation by neighborhood representatives. <b>Priority 1:</b> Establish a formal marketing and promotional program that emphasizes Hessville's convenient location, quality housing, excellent natural areas and parks, historical resources, and quality public services. <b>Priority 1:</b> Establish a public relations/communication program for updating the local community on Plan progress and soliciting input and feedback on a periodic basis.	Support for the Plan from the Hessville Business Association, Hammond Chamber, Lake County, developers, local residents, and the business community. Input and participation from local residents and businesses. Input and participation from local residents, businesses and community organizations. Active support and teamwork from the Hessville Business Association, Hammond Chamber of Commerce, Hessville Historical Society, Hammond Historic Preservation Commission, Lake County Interstate Visitors Information Center, the business community, community organizations, and real estate brokers.	Administrative actions and policy decisions; no new funding required. Administrative actions and policy decisions; no new funding required. Administrative actions and policy decisions; no new funding required. Administrative actions and policy decisions; Hammond Community Corporation Grant Program
<b>LAND-USE &amp; DEVELOPMENT</b> Maintain and enhance residential areas.	(also see Subarea Recommendations) <b>Priority 1:</b> Assist qualified property owners to improve and rehabilitate older or deteriorated housing stock. <b>Priority 1:</b> Enforce local building and maintenance codes. <b>Priority 1:</b> Undertake public improvements within the neighborhoods as required. <b>Priority 1:</b> Facilitate the formation of and provide resources for neighborhood block clubs or associations. <b>Priority 1 through 2:</b> Inventory neighborhood housing stock and formally designate historically or culturally significant homes as local landmarks. <b>Priority 1 through 3:</b> Reinforce and expand homeownership opportunities in the neighborhood especially if rental housing in the neighborhood and/or City is redeveloped. <b>Priority 1 through 3:</b> Monitor isolated commercial uses in residential areas for compatibility and possible replacement/redevelopment for new uses. <b>Priority 1 through 3:</b> Encourage the development of high quality single-family housing in undeveloped or under-developed areas of the neighborhood.	Participation and support from local lenders, real estate brokers and residents, Hessville Historical Society, Hammond Historic Preservation Commission, Neighborhood organizations and block clubs.	Administrative actions and policy decisions; Community Development Block Grant and HOME funds for housing rehabilitation and neighborhood capacity building; City Caring Funds. Special local lender programs such as Mercantile Bank's Rehab/Remodel Program or New Construction/Lot loans, Motor Fuel Tax funds, Hammond Urban Enterprise Association Safety Security Light Program



PROJECT or ACTION

Role of the City of Hammond\*

Other Possible Participants

Potential Tools and Resources

<p>Upgrade and revitalize commercial areas.</p>	<p><b>Priority 1:</b> Retain and support viable existing stores and businesses.  <b>Priority 1:</b> Strive to attract compatible new stores and businesses, with a particular emphasis on family-oriented businesses, dining and cultural entertainment.  <b>Priority 1 through 3:</b> Monitor neighborhood commercial nodes at 165th Street/Crand Avenue and 173rd Street/Parrish Avenue and consider zoning revisions to allow for redevelopment commercial uses that include residential and neighborhood commercial uses.  <b>Priority 1 through 3:</b> Undertake the subarea plans described below for the Kennedy Avenue corridor and 169th Street/Crand Avenue area (includes Briar East Shopping Center).</p>	<p>Hessville Business Association; Hammond Chamber of Commerce; Hammond Urban Enterprise Corporation; property owners and business owners; participation and support from local leaders, real estate brokers and residents.</p>	<p>Administrative actions and policy decisions; City Gaming Funds; Mayor's Office of Economic Development; Business Economic Rebate Program; property tax abatement and financial/technical assistance programs; Hammond Urban Enterprise Zone; Business Facade Program; Safety Security Light Program and financial incentives/technical assistance; Hammond Development Corporation; business Builders training and revolving loan fund and other resources; Tax Increment Financing; Economic/Business Improvement District designation; Indiana Main Street; Indiana Department of Commerce; Lake County Community Economic Development Department; Revolving Loan Fund</p>
<p>Upgrade and enhance industrial areas.</p>	<p><b>Priority 1:</b> Repair, upgrade, or replace existing industrial properties in poor condition.  <b>Priority 1 through 2:</b> Target and promote the development of new light industrial uses in vacant properties within existing industrial/business park settings.  <b>Priority 1:</b> Install identity and directory signage for each industrial/business park location.  <b>Priority 1:</b> Promote the clean up of industrial sites characterized by hazardous or environmental contamination.  <b>Priority 1 through 2:</b> Ensure and install appropriate buffers between industrial properties and adjacent land uses, particularly if new residential development occurs on vacant parcels adjacent to the 169th Place Industrial Park and the industrial uses along Cline Avenue directly north of Oak Crest Lane.  <b>Priority 1 through 3:</b> Undertake the subarea plans described below for the Gibson Woods/Michigan Street Corridor and Area South of the Borman Expressway which includes the Kennedy Industrial Park and the developing Kosan Interstate Business Park.</p>	<p>Businesses and property owners; Gary-Hammond-East Chicago Empowerment Zone; Hammond Urban Enterprise Zone Association</p>	<p>Gary-Hammond-East Chicago Empowerment Zone program incentives; Community Development Block Grant funds; City Gaming Funds; Mayor's Office of Economic Development Business Facade Rebate Program; property tax abatement and financial/technical assistance programs; Indiana Development Finance Authority programs including Brownfields Redevelopment Program, Small Bond Program, Industrial Revenue Bonds and Loan Guaranty Programs; Indiana Department of Environmental Management Brownfields Tax Incentive (federal); Indiana Department of Commerce Industrial Energy/Recycling and Community Development Action Grant Programs; Lake County Community Economic Development Department Revolving Loan Fund; Economic Development Administration Public Works and Economic Development Program</p>

## PROJECT or ACTION

## Role of the City of Hammond\*

## Other Possible Participants

## Potential Tools and Resources

## SUBAREA 1 – Kennedy Avenue:

Strengthen and reinforce Kennedy Avenue as an attractive and convenient mixed-use corridor providing sites for a range of retail stores, office, service establishments and other uses.	<p><b>Priority 1 through 3:</b> Undertake the full range of projects and actions highlighted below for the subarea.</p> <p><b>Priority 1:</b> Consider the need for a follow-up "Corridor Study" to develop more specific recommendations for redevelopment, parking, streetscape improvements, and marketing and promotion.</p> <p><b>Priority 1:</b> Continue to undertake landscaping, signage, sidewalk and other streetscape improvements.</p> <p><b>Priority 1 through 3:</b> Encourage property owners to upgrade existing commercial sites and buildings.</p> <p><b>Priority 1 through 3:</b> Encourage property owners to improve the appearance of parking lots through screening and buffering.</p> <p><b>Priority 1:</b> Preserve and protect buildings with architectural or historic interest.</p> <p><b>Priority 1:</b> Prepare new "appearance guidelines" to ensure that new construction enhances the recommended scale and character of Kennedy Avenue.</p> <p><b>Priority 2:</b> Work with the Norfolk Southern Railway to undertake more extensive landscaping along the railroad corridor.</p>	Hessville Business Association; Hammond Chamber of Commerce; Hammond Development Corporation; Hammond Urban Enterprise Association; property owners and business owners; participation owners and business owners; and support from local lenders, real estate brokers and residents.	Administrative actions and policy decisions; Corridor or district based tools such as tax increment financing; Economic Improvement District; Special Improvement District; and Indiana Main Street
Improve and upgrade the image and appearance of Kennedy Avenue.	<p><b>Priority 1:</b> Prepare new "appearance guidelines" to ensure that new construction enhances the recommended scale and character of Kennedy Avenue.</p> <p><b>Priority 2:</b> Work with the Norfolk Southern Railway to undertake more extensive landscaping along the railroad corridor.</p> <p><b>Priority 1:</b> Improve public signage to direct customers to Kennedy Avenue parking facilities.</p> <p><b>Priority 1:</b> Review Zoning Ordinance parking requirements to ensure that they are adequate to serve the needs of Kennedy Avenue stores and businesses.</p> <p><b>Priority 2:</b> Consider construction of one or more strategically located public parking lots.</p> <p><b>Priority 2:</b> Provide new bicycle parking and related bicycle facilities at selected locations.</p> <p><b>Priority 1:</b> Cooperate with the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission and neighboring communities to monitor traffic operations and traffic flow along the corridor.</p> <p><b>Priority 2:</b> Encourage property owners to combine and share access drives and thereby eliminate curb cuts along the corridor.</p> <p><b>Priority 1:</b> Improve and upgrade sidewalks and crosswalks throughout the corridor.</p> <p><b>Priority 2:</b> Provide seating areas and other pedestrian amenities at selected locations.</p> <p><b>Priority 2:</b> Work with Norfolk Southern Railway to upgrade pedestrian crossings at the railroad.</p>	Hessville Business Association; Hammond Urban Enterprise Association; property owners and business owners; participation owners and business owners; and support from local lenders, real estate brokers and residents.	Administrative actions and policy decisions; City Caring Funds; Mayor's Office of Economic Development Business Facade Rebate Program and financial/technical assistance programs; Hammond Urban Enterprise Zone Business Facade Program and financial incentives/technical assistance; Hammond Community Corporation Grant Program
Promote an adequate and convenient supply of parking to serve Kennedy Avenue customers and employees.	<p><b>Priority 1:</b> Improve public signage to direct customers to Kennedy Avenue parking facilities.</p> <p><b>Priority 1:</b> Review Zoning Ordinance parking requirements to ensure that they are adequate to serve the needs of Kennedy Avenue stores and businesses.</p> <p><b>Priority 2:</b> Consider construction of one or more strategically located public parking lots.</p> <p><b>Priority 2:</b> Provide new bicycle parking and related bicycle facilities at selected locations.</p>	Support and participation from business and property owners.	Administrative actions and policy decisions; City Caring Funds; Motor fuel tax funds; TEA-21; Transportation Enhancement program funds
Enhance traffic operations and traffic safety along Kennedy Avenue	<p><b>Priority 1:</b> Cooperate with the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission and neighboring communities to monitor traffic operations and traffic flow along the corridor.</p> <p><b>Priority 2:</b> Encourage property owners to combine and share access drives and thereby eliminate curb cuts along the corridor.</p>	Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission; business, property owners, and Hessville Business Association	TEA-21 Programs: Transportation Enhancement, Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program, Rail Crossing Safety
Improve and enhance Kennedy Avenue as a pedestrian environment.	<p><b>Priority 1:</b> Improve and upgrade sidewalks and crosswalks throughout the corridor.</p> <p><b>Priority 2:</b> Provide seating areas and other pedestrian amenities at selected locations.</p> <p><b>Priority 2:</b> Work with Norfolk Southern Railway to upgrade pedestrian crossings at the railroad.</p>	Norfolk Southern Railway; Participation and support from business owners, property owners and the Hessville Business Association	Administrative actions and policy decisions; City Caring Funds; Motor fuel Tax Funds; TEA-21; Railroad Crossing Safety Program

PROJECT or ACTION

Role of the City of Hammond\*

Other Possible Participants

Potential Tools and Resources

Promote improvement of the blocks between 16 <sup>th</sup> and 169 <sup>th</sup> streets as a pedestrian-oriented "neighborhood service center."	<p><b>Priority 1:</b> Consider rezoning this area from C-4: General Commercial to C-1: Local Commercial.</p> <p><b>Priority 1:</b> focus initial public improvements and enhancements on this portion of the corridor.</p> <p><b>Priority 1:</b> Consider providing a new public parking lot near the railroad to help serve new stores and businesses.</p> <p><b>Priority 1:</b> Consider the use of Tax Increment financing to stimulate redevelopment.</p>	Participation and support from business owners, property owners and the Hessville Business Association	Administrative actions and policy decisions; City Gaming funds; District oriented resources/tools—Tax Increment Financing, Special Improvement District, Economic Improvement District, Indiana Main Street
Monitor conditions at Van Til's shopping area to ensure that it continues to be a viable and productive commercial center.	<p><b>Priority 1:</b> Cooperate with property owners in this area to maintain a viable and attractive center.</p> <p><b>Priority 1 or beyond:</b> Promote redevelopment of marginal and under-utilized properties in this area for new commercial uses.</p> <p><b>Priority 3 or beyond:</b> Consider the use of Tax Increment financing to promote redevelopment for a new commercial center at some point in the future.</p>	Participation and support from business owners, property owners and the Hessville Business Association	Mayor's Office of Economic Development Business Facade Rebate Program, property tax abatement and financial/technical assistance programs; Hammond Urban Enterprise Zone Business Facade Program and financial incentives/technical assistance;
Promote compatible new retail, office and service development and redevelopment at other selected locations.	<p><b>Priority 1:</b> Implement any zoning or code revisions required to facilitate desirable new development.</p> <p><b>Priority 1:</b> Focus initial redevelopment efforts on vacant land and buildings, and severely deteriorated and/or obsolete structures.</p> <p><b>Priority 1 through 3:</b> Continue working with and assisting property owners and developers in executing compatible and desirable new developments.</p>	Participation and support from business owners, property owners, local lenders, real estate brokers, and the Hessville Business Association	Administrative actions and policy decisions

## PROJECT or ACTION

## Role of the City of Hammond\*

## Other Possible Participants

## Potential Tools and Resources

## SUBAREA 2 - 169th Street / Grand Avenue:

Develop quality residential housing (primarily single-family detached) on the vacant/wooded areas south of 169th Street, between Grand and Colorado Avenues.

**Priority 1:** Consider rezoning the area from R-3: Residential to R-1: Residential or a Planned Unit Development (P.U.D.) to accommodate single-family development rather than multi-family housing.

**Priority 1:** Working with the property owners, actively seek development proposals which meet the City's objectives for residential development of the area.

**Priority 2:** Offer review and technical assistance to developers possible, the existing mature trees, wooded areas, and water feature.

**Priority 2:** New development should plan for a network of connecting roads and through streets - dead ends and cul-de-sacs should be discouraged.

**Priority 1:** Encourage property owner to implement site improvements such as landscaping, parking lot screening, parking lot surface repair, and updated/improved signage.

**Priority 1:** Improve building facades and building maintenance.

**Priority 2:** If redevelopment of the site is pursued, work with property owner and developers to attract desirable commercial tenants and design an attractive and appropriate "neighborhood shopping center."

**Priority 3:** Consider use of TIF to promote redevelopment for a new commercial center at some point in the future.

**Priority 1:** Improve public properties (high school, cemetery, and water tank property) with enhanced landscaping, screening, and signage.

**Priority 1:** Prepare a detailed streetscape improvement and phasing plan, including landscaping, parkway trees, lighting, signage, and pedestrian amenities, which covers the streets in the subarea.

**Priority 2:** Improve key intersections along 169th Street (Grand and Parish Avenues) as unique features and focal points, characterizing and identifying this centralized shopping area of the Hessville.

**Priority 2:** Install a gateway/entry feature on the east end of 169th Street welcoming people into the Hessville Neighborhood.

Improve, Revitalize, Redevelop B'nai B'rith Shopping Center.

Participation and support from business owners, property owners, local lenders, real estate brokers, and estate brokers, and the Hessville Business Association

Administrative actions and policy decisions; Mayor's Office of Economic Development Business Facade Rebate Program and financial/technical assistance programs; Tax Increment Financing

Improve appearance of the area through public property improvements.

Implement streetscape improvement program along 169th Street and portions of Grand and Parish Avenues.

School City of Hammond, North Township, Hammond Water Works

City Gaming Funds, Motor Fuel Tax Funds, Community Development Block Grant Infrastructure Funds, Indiana Department of Transportation

**PROJECT or ACTION**

**Role of the City of Hammond\***

**Other Possible Participants**

**Potential Tools and Resources**

Protect and enhance residential properties along the north side of 169 <sup>th</sup> Street.	<p><b>Priority 1:</b> Working with property owners, protect and enhance the residential properties along the north side of 169<sup>th</sup> Street through use of additional landscaping, screening and façade enhancements.</p> <p><b>Priority 1:</b> Deter the conversion or redevelopment of these single-family homes for non-residential uses – may require zoning or other regulatory changes.</p>	Participation and support from business owners, property owners, local lenders, real estate brokers, residents, and the Hessville Business Association	Administrative actions and policy decisions; Community Development Block Grant and HOME funds for housing rehabilitation and neighborhood capacity building; City Gaming Funds; Special local lender programs such as Mercantile Bank's Rehab/Remodel Program or New Construction/Lot loans, Hammond Urban Enterprise Association Safety Security Light Program.
Encourage the improvement/revitalization of smaller commercial properties for 169 <sup>th</sup> Street and Grand Avenue.	<p><b>Priority 1:</b> Working with property and business owners, encourage site and building improvements, including (but not limited to) landscaping, parking lot screening, parking lot surface repairs, building maintenance and façade upgrades, and improved signage.</p>	Participation and support from business owners, property owners, local lenders, real estate brokers, residents, and the Hessville Business Association	Administrative actions and policy decisions; Mayor's Office of Economic Development Business Facade Rebate Program and financial/technical assistance programs; Tax Increment Financing
Improve and enhance the area near 169 <sup>th</sup> Street and Grand Avenue as a pedestrian environment.	<p><b>Priority 1:</b> Improve and upgrade sidewalks and crosswalks throughout the area.</p> <p><b>Priority 1:</b> Provide seating areas, bike racks, and other pedestrian and bicycle amenities at selected locations.</p>		Community Development Block Grant Funds; City Gaming Funds

## PROJECT or ACTION

## Role of the City of Hammond\*

## Other Possible Participants

## Potential Tools and Resources

## SUBAREA 3 – Area South of the Borman Expressway:

Promote redevelopment of all or a portion of the River Park Apartment complex for commercial service or office uses.	<p><b>Priority 1:</b> Consider the use of Tax Increment Financing to promote redevelopment for new commercial service and office uses.</p> <p><b>Priority 1:</b> Reclassify zoning from R-3; Residential to C-4; General Commercial.</p> <p><b>Priority 1:</b> Work to obtain site control of the property or cooperation of the property and actively seek development proposals which meet Plan redevelopment objectives for the site.</p> <p><b>Priority 1 through 2:</b> Provide review and technical assistance to developers.</p>	Participation by property owners and developers	Administrative actions and policy decisions, tax increment financing
Promote the continued development of vacant industrial properties and redevelopment or rehabilitation of marginal or deteriorated industrial properties.	<p><b>Priority 1:</b> Support the build out of the Krosan Interstate Business Park with quality light industrial development.</p> <p><b>Priority 2:</b> Provide review and technical assistance to developers.</p> <p><b>Priority 1 through 3:</b> Encourage quality new development within the existing Kennedy Industrial Park by demolition of marginal and deteriorated buildings and consolidation of adjacent parcels to permit multiple-tenant buildings and/or consolidated parking, access, and loading areas.</p>	Participation and support from business owners, property owners, local lenders, and real estate brokers	Hammond Development Corporation Business Builders Technical Assistance and Revolving Loan Fund
Strengthen the hotel/motel and commercial service cluster at Cline Avenue.	<p><b>Priority 1:</b> Reclassify the zoning of properties from I-1: Light Industrial to C-4: General Commercial.</p> <p><b>Priority 1:</b> Encourage property owners to install unifying frontage improvements to distinguish the area from the light industrial parks to the west, including (but not limited to) landscaping, signage, and accent lighting).</p> <p><b>Priority 1 through 2:</b> Promote redevelopment of vacant properties for new commercial service or office uses.</p> <p><b>Priority 2:</b> Provide review and technical assistance to developers.</p>	Participation and support from business owners, property owners, local lenders, and real estate brokers	Administrative actions and policy decisions; City Gaming Funds; Mayor's Office of Economic Development Business Facade Rebate Program, property tax abatement and financial/technical assistance programs; Lake County Community Economic Development Department Revolving Loan Fund
Implement streetscape and appearance improvements.	<p><b>Priority 1:</b> Install gateway design elements at Kennedy and Cline Avenues, including signage, landscaping and accent lighting.</p> <p><b>Priority 1:</b> Install directory/identity signage at the primary entrance to each key activity area, particularly at the intersections of both Nevada and New Jersey Avenues at 179<sup>th</sup> Street.</p> <p><b>Priority 1 through 3:</b> Working with property and business owners, encourage site and building improvements, including (but not limited to) landscaping, parking lot and loading/service area screening, parking lot surface repairs, building maintenance and facade upgrades, and improved signage.</p>	Participation and support from business owners, property owners, local lenders, and real estate brokers	Administrative actions and policy decisions; Community Development Block Grant funds; City Gaming Funds; Mayor's Office of Economic Development Business Facade Rebate Program, property tax abatement and financial/technical assistance programs; Lake County Community Economic Development Department Revolving Loan Fund

## PROJECT or ACTION

## Role of the City of Hammond\*

## Other Possible Participants

## Potential Tools and Resources

Improve and enhance traffic circulation and access points.	<p><b>Priority 1:</b> Resurface and install right-of-way improvements (including curb and gutters and lighting as appropriate) for 17<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> Street and Nevada and New Jersey Avenues.</p> <p><b>Priority 1:</b> Improve safety and efficiency of access driveways and turning angles for trucks and automobiles.</p> <p><b>Priority 1 through 3:</b> Promote the consolidation of parking areas, access drives, and loading and service areas in the Kennedy Industrial Park as properties are rehabilitated or redeveloped.</p>	Participation and support from business owners and property owners.	Community Development Block Grant funds; City Gaming funds; Economic Development; Administration; Public Works and Economic Development Program
Promote and enhance access and recreation along the Little Calumet River corridor.	<p><b>Priority 1:</b> Revise the Zoning Ordinance to reflect a flood protection easement along the Little Calumet River (S1; Institutional and Open Space).</p> <p><b>Priority 1 through 2:</b> Install a bike/hike trail and greenway along the north and south banks of the Little Calumet River corridor.</p> <p><b>Priority 1 through 2:</b> Support and promote the initiatives of the Little Calumet River Flood Control/Recreation Project.</p>	Little Calumet River Basin Development Commission; Army Corps of Engineers	Administrative actions and policy decisions; Indiana Department of Natural Resources Grant Programs; TEA-21 Transportation Enhancement Program
Protect and conserve environmentally significant areas.	<p><b>Priority 1 through 3:</b> Protect Carlton Oxbow Park and the Little Calumet River Corridor with appropriate buffers from adjacent land uses.</p> <p><b>Priority 1 through 2:</b> Reconcile a peculiarity in the Hammond/Highland municipal boundary via a land swap of an area north of the channelized portion of the River with an area south of the River.</p>	Highland Indiana; Little Calumet River Basin Development Commission; participation and support from property owners and business owners	Administrative actions and policy decisions
Improve pedestrian and bicycle safety in select locations.	<p><b>Priority 1 through 3:</b> Encourage the installation of pedestrian pathways from parking areas to primary business entrances in commercial and industrial areas.</p> <p><b>Priority 1 through 2:</b> Install seating and covered waiting areas for bus stop locations.</p> <p><b>Priority 1 through 3:</b> Ensure safe access for users of bike/hike trails particularly at Kennedy Avenue and Cline Avenue crossings.</p>	Participation and support from property owners and business owners; Little Calumet River Basin Development Commission	Community Development Block Grant funds; TEA-21 Transportation Enhancement Program; Indiana Department of Natural Resources Recreational Trails Grant Program

## PROJECT or ACTION

## Role of the City of Hammond\*

## Other Possible Participants

## Potential Tools and Resources

**SUBAREA 4 – Gibson Woods / Michigan Street Corridor:**

<p>Retain the basic land-use pattern of the area as industrial.</p>	<p><b>Priority 1 through 3:</b> Promote industrial land-uses in the subarea by providing appropriate economic development incentives and tools.</p> <p><b>Priority 1 through 3:</b> Support the City's empowerment zone area, to make the sites ready for development.</p> <p><b>Priority 1 through 3:</b> Install infrastructure in areas not currently served.</p> <p><b>Priority 1 through 3:</b> Maintain good rail access to industrial areas.</p>	<p>Gary-Hammond-East Chicago Empowerment Zone Association, Zone, Urban Enterprise Zone Association, Hessville Business Association, Hammond Development Corporation, Hammond Chamber of Commerce, participation and support from property owners and business owners</p>	<p>Gary-Hammond-East Chicago Empowerment Zone program incentives; City Caring Funds; Mayor's Office of Economic Development Business Facade Rebate Program, property tax abatement and financial/technical assistance programs; Indiana Development Finance Authority programs including Brownfields Redevelopment Program, Small Bond Program, Industrial Revenue Bonds and Loan Guaranty Programs; Indiana Department of Environmental Management Brownfields Tax Incentive (federal); Indiana Department of Commerce Industrial, Energy/Recycling and Community Development Action Grant Programs; Lake County Community Economic Development Department Revolving Loan Fund; Economic Development Administration Public Works and Economic Development Program</p>
<p>Preserve significant environmental lands.</p>	<p><b>Priority 1:</b> Preserve and enhance the four state nature preserves via appropriate fencing, surveillance and signage.</p> <p><b>Priority 1:</b> Promote the preservation of other lands considered environmentally significant.</p> <p><b>Priority 1:</b> Preserve significant wetlands and threatened endangered species.</p> <p><b>Priority 1:</b> Rezone the nature preserves and environmentally significant lands to S-1: Institutional Open Space</p> <p><b>Priority 1 through 3:</b> Support the Grand Calumet Task Force Vision Plan and recognize and promote the river corridor as a recreational area.</p> <p><b>Priority 1:</b> Relocate any active recreational areas or facilities to areas not identified as environmentally significant as appropriate.</p>	<p>Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Nature Conservancy, Shirley Heintz Foundation, Lake County Parks and Recreation Department, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Grand Calumet Task Force</p>	<p>Administrative actions and policy decisions; Indiana Department of Natural Resources Grant Programs</p>



PROJECT or ACTION	Role of the City of Hammond*	Other Possible Participants	Potential Tools and Resources
<p>Redevelop commercial land-uses.</p>	<p><b>Priority 1 through 3:</b> Redevelop under-developed commercial land-uses to more intensive uses.  <b>Priority 2:</b> Promote businesses that would service and benefit from the Gary/Chicago Airport.  <b>Priority 2:</b> Redevelop the commercial area directly north of Gibson Avenue as the "gateway" to the suburbs.</p>	<p>Gary-Hammond-East Chicago Empowerment Zone Association, Urban Enterprise Zone Association, Hessville Business Association, Hammond Development Corporation, Hammond Chamber of Commerce</p>	<p>Gary-Hammond-East Chicago Empowerment Zone program incentives; Mayor's Office of Economic Development Business Facade Rebate Program; property tax abatement and financial/technical assistance programs; Hammond Development Corporation Business Builders training and revolving loan fund</p>
<p>Improve traffic circulation and access.</p>	<p><b>Priority 2:</b> Construct additional north-south and east-west access roads.  <b>Priority 2:</b> Redesign the frontage roads to allow for better turning movements and access.  <b>Priority 2:</b> Improve the Gibson Transfer Facility to allow for easier and safer truck movements.  <b>Priority 2:</b> Redesign Michigan Street/U.S. 20 to allow for left and right turning movements and safer access to properties.  <b>Priority 2:</b> Support the development of a bicycle trail along the Grand Calumet River.  <b>Priority 2:</b> Provide opportunities in appropriate areas for recreational facilities such as a skate park.</p>	<p>Indiana Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration</p>	<p>City Gaming Funds; Economic Development Administration Public Works and Economic Development Program funds</p>
<p>Provide opportunities for recreational uses.</p>		<p>Grand Calumet Task Force, Lake County Parks and Recreation</p>	<p>TEA-21 Transportation Enhancement Funds, Indiana Dept. of Natural Resources Grant Programs; Build Indiana</p>

## PROJECT or ACTION

## Role of the City of Hammond\*

## Other Possible Participants

## Potential Tools and Resources

<b>COMMUNITY FACILITIES</b> (also see Subarea Recommendations)			
Improve and enhance local parks, recreational facilities and natural areas.	<p><b>Priority 1:</b> Implement the Dowling Park Master Plan.</p> <p><b>Priority 1:</b> Construct an intergenerational community center in Dowling Park.</p> <p><b>Priority 1:</b> Support the initiatives and projects of the Hammond 5-year Parks and Recreation master plan.</p> <p><b>Priority 1 through 2:</b> Identify location for and construct facilities for fresh-air in-line skating and skateboarding.</p> <p><b>Priority 1:</b> Explore opportunities for community gardens or other public open space in currently land-locked areas within residential areas.</p> <p><b>Priority 1 through 3:</b> Implement actions of subarea plans for the Gibson Woods/Michigan Street Corridor and the Area South of the Borman Expressway (Carlson Oaklawn Park).</p> <p><b>Priority 1 through 3:</b> Continue to promote cooperation, interaction and mutual support between the City, School City of Hammond, Lake County, private schools, and community/fraternal organizations to provide responsive and creative programs and facilities for recreation.</p>	Hammond Parks Department, Lake County Parks and Recreation Department, School City of Hammond, Hammond YMCA, Fraternal organizations, Hessville Historical Society, and Hammond Historic Preservation Commission	Administrative actions and policy decisions; Indiana Department of Natural Resources Programs; City Gaming Funds; Lake County Build Indiana funds
Cooperate with School City of Hammond to maintain quality public educational facilities.	<p><b>Priority 1 through 3:</b> Continue to cooperate and work with School City of Hammond to resolve site and facility problems, especially related to parking, traffic circulation and generation, and buyers/compatibility with surrounding land-uses.</p> <p><b>Priority 1 through 3:</b> Undertake planning and implementation of program for installing carrier infrastructure for fiber optic cables to households when streets and sidewalks are installed.</p>	School City of Hammond	Lake County Build Indiana funds; City Gaming Funds
Undertake water, sanitary, storm sewer and other utility system improvements as required.	<p><b>Priority 1 through 2:</b> Upgrade all 4-inch and 6-inch water mains to 8-inch water mains.</p> <p><b>Priority 1 through 2:</b> Separate all remaining combined sanitary and storm sewers to alleviate discharge into residential basements and both the Little Calumet and Grand Calumet Rivers.</p> <p><b>Priority 1:</b> Support the completion of the Little Calumet River Flood Control/Recreation Project.</p>	Little Calumet River Basin Economic Development Commission, Army Corps of Engineers, Hammond Sanitary District, Hammond Water Works	
Monitor the adequacy of other community facilities and services, and advocate upgrades and refinements as required.	<p><b>Priority 1 through 3:</b> Monitor fire and police facilities and programs to maintain high levels of responsive, local service.</p> <p><b>Priority 1 through 3:</b> Continue to monitor library services, programs and facilities and upgrade as appropriate.</p> <p><b>Priority 1 through 3:</b> Continue to work with and support other agencies and organizations such as the YMCA, the U.S. Post Office, the Little Calumet River Basin Development Commission, the Grand Calumet River Task Force, as well as local churches and other institutions.</p>	Ongoing communication, cooperation and mutual support of community organizations	

PROJECT or ACTION

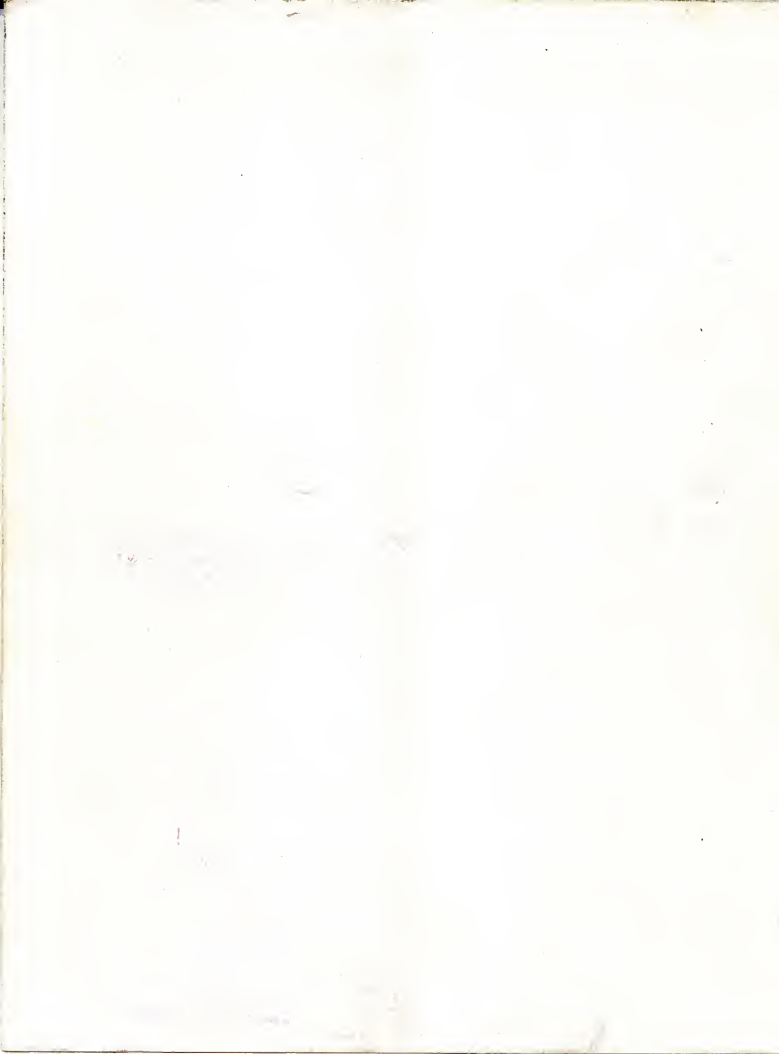
Role of the City of Hammond\*

Other Possible Participants

Potential Tools and Resources

<p><b>TRANSPORTATION</b> (also see Subarea Recommendations)</p> <p>Maintain and enhance traffic circulation and traffic safety throughout the neighborhood.</p> <p><b>Priority 1:</b> Improve existing infrastructure, particularly roadways with no curb and gutter, no sidewalks, deteriorated pavement, and inadequate street lighting.</p> <p><b>Priority 1 through 2:</b> Upgrade major intersections that are focal points for major traffic generators.</p> <p><b>Priority 1:</b> Create a long-term (five- to ten-year) capital improvement program.</p> <p><b>Priority 1 through 2:</b> Work toward solutions for alleviating interruption of traffic flow, traffic delays, and noise created by the Norfolk Southern railroad.</p> <p><b>Priority 1 through 3:</b> Track recommendations and project progress of the City/Chicago Airport Master Plan to determine potential noise and roadway impacts.</p> <p>Continue to develop new bicycle routes and facilities.</p>	<p><b>Priority 1:</b> Install bike/hike trails and facilities along the Grand Calumet River, the Little Calumet River, and the Conrail right-of-way.</p> <p><b>Priority 1 through 2:</b> Install pedestrian and bicycle route connections between Hessville Park, Dowling Park, John Hill Baseball Park, and Wedgewood Softball Park.</p>	<p>Indiana Department of Transportation, Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission</p> <p>Grand Calumet River Task Force, Little Calumet River Basin Development Commission</p>	<p>Community Development Block Grant funds; TEA-21 programs; Motor Fuel Tax funds</p> <p>Indiana Department of Natural Resources Grants; TEA-21 Transportation Enhancement Grants</p>
<p><b>OTHER PROJECTS or ACTIONS</b></p> <p>Undertake other project and actions that will further enhance Hessville's community image.</p>	<p><b>Priority 1:</b> Continue to build stewardship efforts for cultural, historic and architectural resources, neighborhood heritage, and unique natural areas.</p> <p><b>Priority 1 through 2:</b> Implement a community signage program to direct residents and visitors to key activity areas and points of interest within Hessville.</p> <p><b>Priority 1 through 2:</b> Continue to improve and enhance entryways and points of interest with visually unifying markers, landscaping and signage.</p> <p><b>Priority 1 through 3:</b> Continue to cultivate neighborhood interest interaction, and involvement through creative celebration, programs, promotions, and education.</p>	<p>Participation and support from residents, businesses, Hessville Historical Society, Hammond Historic Preservation Commission, Hessville Business Association, Lake County Interstate Visitors Information Center, neighborhood groups, block clubs, and community organizations</p>	<p>Community Development Block Grant Program funds for neighborhood capacity building; Hammond Community Corporation grant program; Indiana Arts Commission</p>

\*NOTE: "Role of the City" includes actions and activities to be undertaken by various City departments, boards, and commissions. These departments, boards and commissions are not mentioned individually.



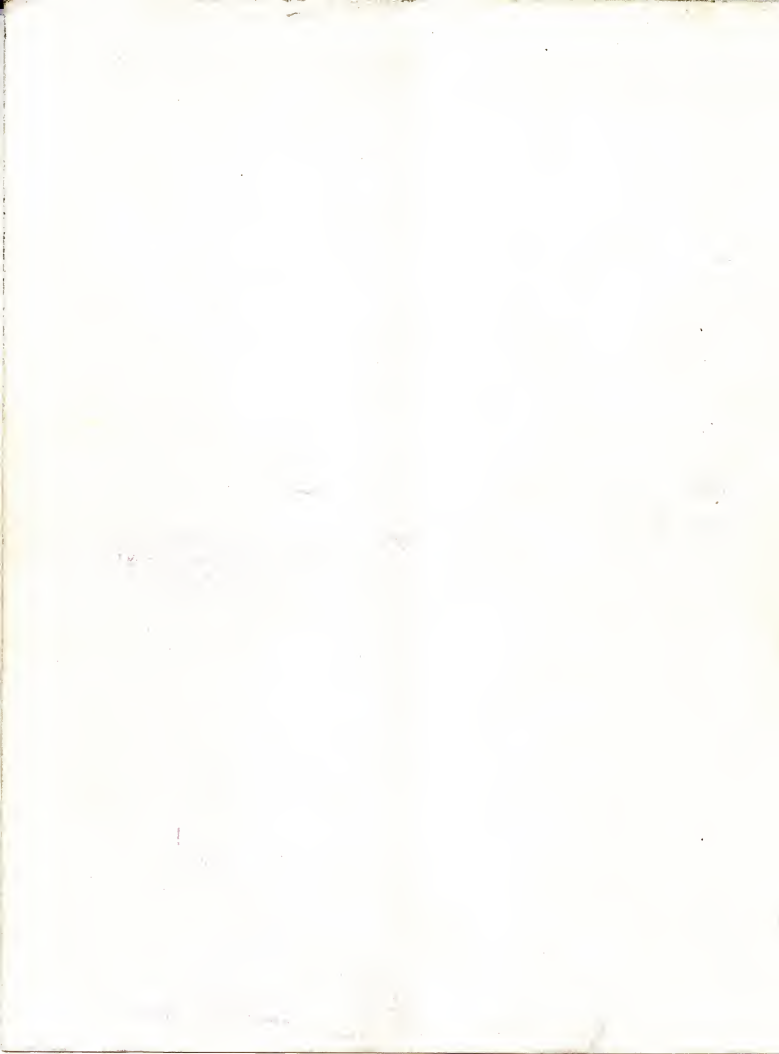


Figure 18

## Kennedy Avenue: Planning Influences

**K**ennedy Avenue is a north-south arterial street that connects Hessville to nearby neighborhoods and the regional highway system. It is also an intensely developed land-use corridor providing sites for a wide range of commercial, public and institutional uses.

Existing features and conditions that will influence opportunities for improvement and development along Kennedy Avenue are highlighted in Figure 18.



### Character of Kennedy Avenue:

**A** - A wide roadway, small commercial buildings and overhead utility lines characterize the corridor.

**B** - Walgreen's is an important new anchor at 169th and Kennedy.

**C** - The Hansen Center YMCA and other historic structures add visual interest.

**D** - A pedestrian orientation and an attractive streetscape enhance the blocks near Martha Street.

**E** - The Little Red Schoolhouse and Hessville Park are major attractions.

**F** - Several public and semi-public buildings, including the U.S. Post Office, add to the character of the corridor.



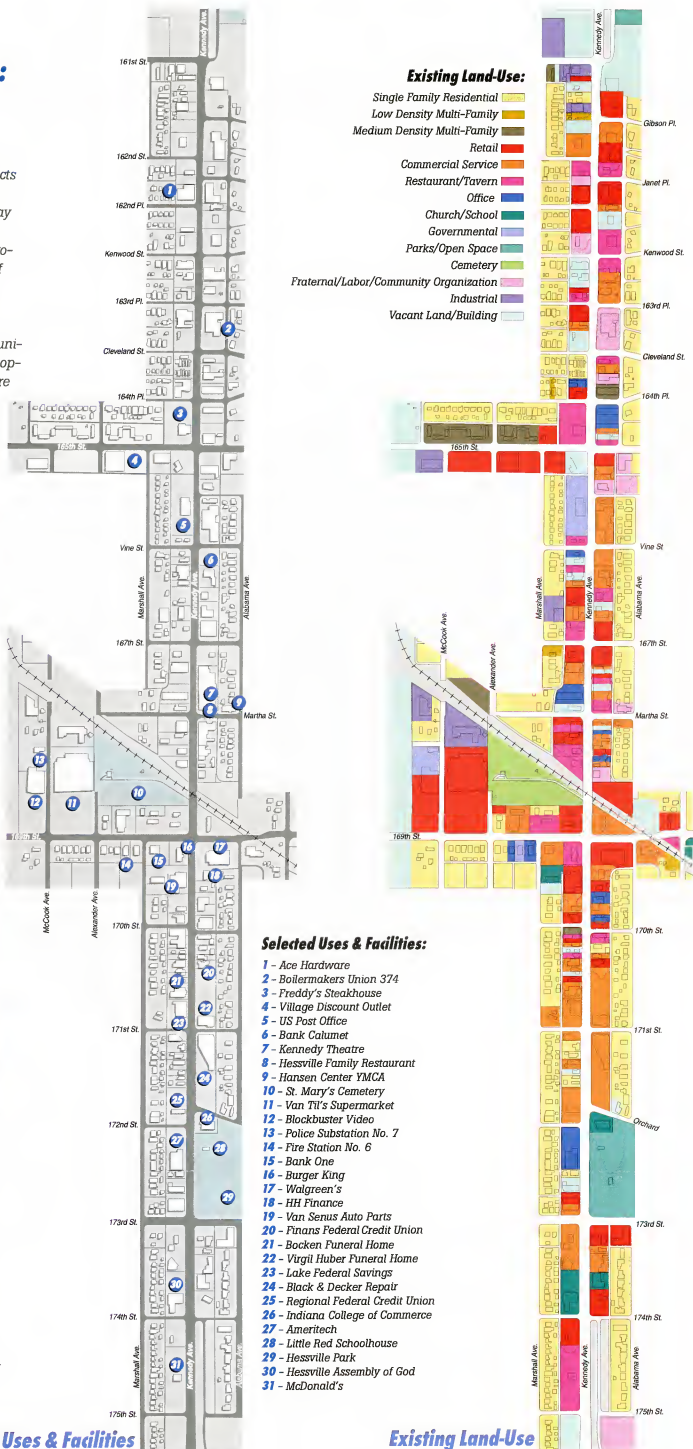
### Selected Uses & Facilities

### Selected Uses & Facilities:

- 1 - Ace Hardware
- 2 - Boilermakers Union 374
- 3 - Freddy's Steakhouse
- 4 - Village Discount Outlet
- 5 - US Post Office
- 6 - Bank Calumet
- 7 - Kennedy Theatre
- 8 - Hessville Family Restaurant
- 9 - Hansen Center YMCA
- 10 - St. Mary's Cemetery
- 11 - Van Til's Supermarket
- 12 - Blockbuster Video
- 13 - Police Substation No. 7
- 14 - Fire Station No. 6
- 15 - Bank One
- 16 - Burger King
- 17 - Walgreen's
- 18 - HH Finance
- 19 - Van Senus Auto Parts
- 20 - Pinans Federal Credit Union
- 21 - Bocken Funeral Home
- 22 - Virgil Huber Funeral Home
- 23 - Lake Federal Savings
- 24 - Black & Decker Repair
- 25 - Regional Federal Credit Union
- 26 - Indiana College of Commerce
- 27 - Ameritech
- 28 - Little Red Schoolhouse
- 29 - Hessville Park
- 30 - Hessville Assembly of God
- 31 - McDonald's

### Existing Land-Use:

- Single Family Residential
- Low Density Multi-Family
- Medium Density Multi-Family
- Retail
- Commercial Service
- Restaurant/Tavern
- Office
- Church/School
- Governmental
- Parks/Open Space
- Cemetery
- Fraternal/Labor/Community Organization
- Industrial
- Vacant Land/Building



### Existing Land-Use









Figure 19

## Kennedy Avenue: Plan Recommendations













**K**ennedy Avenue should be upgraded and revitalized as an attractive and convenient mixed-use corridor that serves and supports Hessville and surrounding neighborhoods. It should be improved as a traffic carrier, a shopping and service area for nearby residents, an employment center, and a "front door" to both Hessville and the Hammond community.

Improvement and development recommendations for Kennedy Avenue are highlighted in Figure 19. More detailed recommendations are presented in the accompanying text.

### Improvement & Development Sites:

-  Vacant buildings and land parcels should either be reused or redeveloped for new stores, businesses, parking or open space.
-  Marginal, underutilized and severely deteriorated properties should either be substantially upgraded or removed to allow for new development.
-  Many other existing stores and businesses would benefit from either building or site improvements.
-  Residential buildings are not appropriate along the Kennedy Avenue frontage and should eventually be redeveloped for new uses.
-  Residential properties located along key streets near Kennedy Avenue that should either be substantially upgraded or redeveloped.
-  "Clusters" of properties that may represent opportunities for improvement or development (see text for a description).

### Improvement & Development Guidelines:

-  Maintain Kennedy Avenue as a major arterial route; improve traffic operational conditions as required.
-  Continue streetscape improvements along the full length of Kennedy Avenue as it passes through the Hessville Neighborhood.
-  Enhance the appearance of the major east-west streets that cross Kennedy Avenue.
-  Provide more extensive "gateway" design treatments where Kennedy Avenue and other major streets enter the Hessville Neighborhood.
-  Provide additional design enhancements at the major intersections along the corridor.
-  Maintain and enhance buildings with architectural and historic interest.
-  Revitalize the blocks between 167th and 171st Streets as a pedestrian-oriented, neighborhood shopping and service area.
-  Promote free-standing office, heavy commercial, and other employment uses in the blocks north of 164th Place.
-  Upgrade the appearance of the railroad corridor in the vicinity of Kennedy Avenue.
-  Improve linkages between the north and south sides of the railroad.
-  Provide safe and convenient pedestrian crosswalks at key locations along Kennedy Avenue.
-  Improve pedestrian linkages between the commercial area and adjacent residential areas.

**NOTE:** See text for additional improvement and development guidelines.



Improvement &  
Development Sites

Improvement &  
Development Guidelines

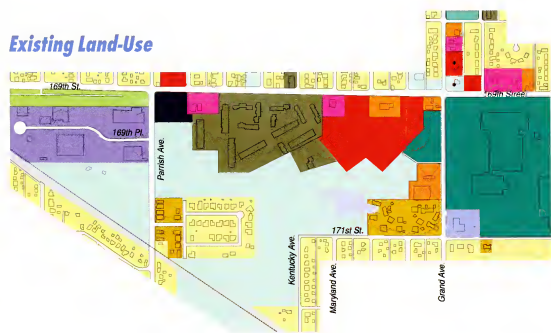
Figure 20

## 169th Street/ Grand Avenue: Planning Influences

The 169th Street corridor is a major east-west arterial that connects Hessville to Cline Avenue, the City of Gary, and other areas of Hammond to the west. Grand Avenue is a north-south arterial that primarily accommodates local traffic, rather than regional trips through Hammond. The area surrounding the intersection of these two streets is comprised of a mix of uses including retail, restaurants, commercial service, institutional, office, and vacant properties, all surrounded by residential neighborhoods.

Existing features and conditions that will influence opportunities for improvement and development within the 169th Street/Grand Avenue subarea are highlighted in Figure 20.

### Existing Land-Use



### Selected Uses & Facilities



### Existing Land-Use:

- Single-Family Residential
- Low-Density Multi-Family
- Medium-Density Multi-Family
- Retail
- Commercial Service
- Restaurant/Tavern
- Office
- Church/School
- Governmental
- Parks/Open Space
- Cemetery
- Fraternal/Labor Organization
- Industrial
- Vacant Land
- Vacant Building

### Selected Uses & Facilities:

- 1 - Water Tank
- 2 - Grand Food Mart, Briar East Liquors, Modern Way Cleaners
- 3 - Lung Wan Restaurant
- 4 - La Joya Restaurant
- 5 - Brook Forest Apartments
- 6 - Long John Silvers
- 7 - Mercantile Bank
- 8 - Briar East Shopping Center
  - ColorTyme
  - Family Dollar
  - True Value Hardware
  - Save-A-Lot
  - H & R Block
  - Briar East Flowers
  - Spirit Books and Gifts
  - Lake County Child Care
  - Lake Co. Addition and Family Care
- 9 - Marathon Gas Station
- 10 - Grand Foods
- 11 - Camino Real Restaurant
- 12 - L. A. Shrimp Restaurant
- 13 - Master Fire
- 14 - Zante's Restaurant
- 15 - McDonald's
- 16 - Malik's Restaurant
- 17 - Clark Gas Station
- 18 - Morton High School
- 19 - Hammond School City Maintenance and Operations Facility
- 20 - Iglesia Del Pueblo Church
- 21 - Mirror Finish Hand Car Wash
- 22 - Wesco Distribution
- 23 - Ridgewood Condominiums
- 24 - Howard Branch Library



### Character of 169th Street/Grand Avenue:

**A** - 169th Street is characterized by a mix of uses, redevelopment opportunities, and a need for overall appearance improvements.

**B** - As the subarea's "focal point," Briar East Shopping Center suffers from underutilization and an overall poor appearance.

**C** - Brook Forest Apartments is a well-maintained property, providing sound buildings and attractive grounds.

**D** - Redevelopment opportunities exist throughout the subarea, like this vacant gas station property.

**E** - Residential neighborhoods are located across from unattractive commercial areas.





Figure 21

## 169th Street/ Grand Avenue: Plan Recommendations

**T**he 169th Street/Grand Avenue Subarea is an important focal point within the Hessville Neighborhood and should be revitalized as an attractive and convenient shopping, service, and public facility area that supports Hessville and surrounding neighborhoods. Being centrally located within the neighborhood and having good overall access provides the subarea with the potential for establishing and maintaining a strong commercial component.

The improvement and/or redevelopment of key properties within the subarea are vital to its successful revitalization. Existing residential areas and the potential for new additional residential development should help to support commercial redevelopment and improvement efforts.

Improvement and development recommendations for the subarea are highlighted in Figure 21. More detailed recommendations are provided in the accompanying text.

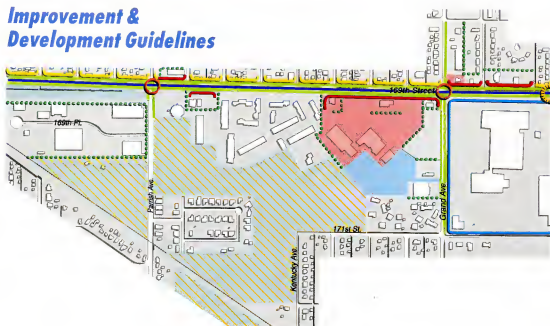


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### Improvement & Development Sites



### Improvement & Development Guidelines



### Improvement & Development Sites:

- Vacant/wooded areas should be developed for residential uses, primarily single-family detached housing similar to homes in Higgins Park Addition. Consideration should also be given to incorporating high quality, appropriate owner-occupied condominiums, townhomes, and senior housing.
- Briar East Shopping Center should be substantially upgraded and possibly redeveloped in its entirety or in part.
- Existing stores and businesses that would benefit from either building or site improvements, including facade, signage, landscaping, screening, and parking area improvements.

### Improvement & Development Guidelines:

- Maintain 169th Street as a major arterial route; improve traffic operational conditions as required.
- Implement a streetscape improvement program along 169th Street, along Grand Avenue south of 169th to the library on the east side and to Wesco Distribution on the west side, and along Grand Avenue to the north to Master Fire on the east side.
- Provide more extensive "gateway" design treatments at the eastern edge of the subarea, welcoming to the Hessville Neighborhood those people coming from Gary or exiting from Cline Avenue and traveling west on 169th Street.
- Provide additional design enhancements at the major intersections along 169th Street to help establish a Hessville identity and provide safe, convenient, and attractive pedestrian crosswalks.
- Develop new quality residential housing (primarily single-family detached), utilizing the wooded lands and existing water feature as a foundation for the character for new development. (Housing similar to Higgins Park Addition would be appropriate and desired.) Consideration should also be given to incorporating high quality, appropriate owner-occupied condominiums, townhomes, and senior housing.

- Vacant properties on the north side of 169th Street, west of Grand Avenue, should be redeveloped for residential uses.
- The vacant gas station property should be redeveloped for another commercial use.
- Public facilities/properties should be improved with additional landscaping, screening, and signage enhancements.
- Residential properties located along 169th Street should be improved with additional landscaping, screening, and property and building upgrades where appropriate.
- Vacant area is the potential site of the new location for the Woodland Child Care Center and is appropriate for "transitional" commercial, residential, or institutional use.

- Residential property frontage improvements should include landscaping, screening/fencing, and site and building improvements where appropriate to strengthen the residential character of the neighborhood.
- Commercial property frontage improvements should focus on screening surface parking and improving the overall appearance of the building and property, and include elements of additional landscaping, improved signage, and facade improvements.
- School property frontage improvements should utilize landscaping to screen parking areas and provide a more attractive site.
- On-site landscaping should be used on commercial properties to screen commercial activity and "break up" extended views of open parking areas.
- Appropriate location for development of a variety of uses including shopping center expansion, institutional facility, child care facility, or residential/senior housing units in coordinated effort with area to the west and southwest.
- Commercial sites in need of major improvement or redevelopment, may include adaptive reuse of existing structures, demolition of existing structures, additional development and site improvements to augment existing structures and uses, and general site improvements relating to property maintenance and appearance.

**NOTE:** See text for additional improvement and development guidelines.

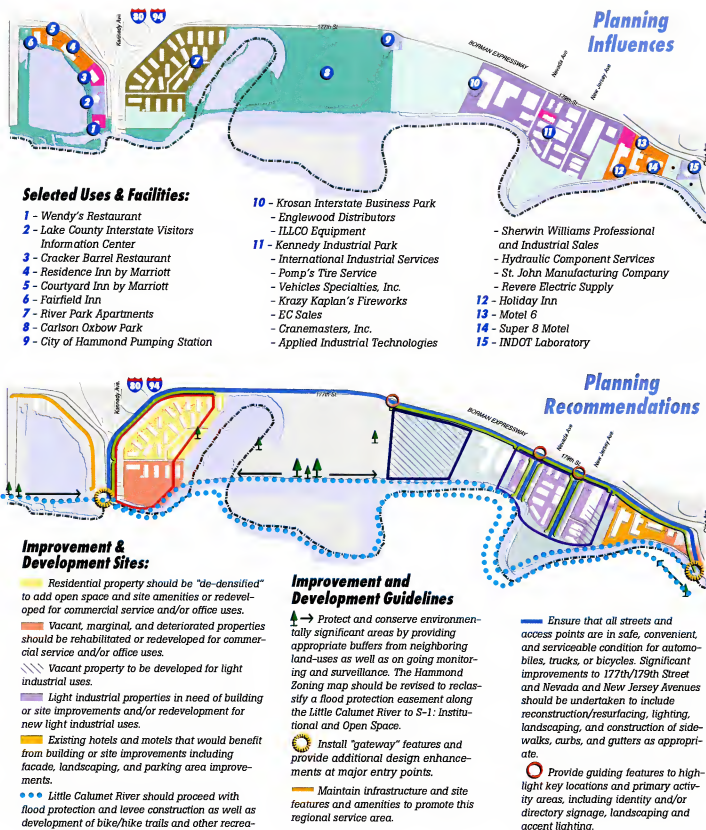
Figure 22

## Area South of the Borman Expressway: Influences & Recommendations

The area south of the Borman Expressway encompasses the southernmost portion of the Hessville neighborhood and includes a distinctive mix of uses and properties supported by convenient access to the interstate highway system. This area contains light industrial and commercial service businesses; the new Lake County Interstate Visitors Information Center; Carlson Oxbow Nature Park; a public works facility; and a large multi-family rental residential complex.

Several opportunities remain for expanding upon and enhancing recent developments, the active business base, and regional features at the City entryway. Key economic development goals and land-use recommendations include new industrial or commercial development; public infrastructure and image-enhancing improvements; and rehabilitation and/or redevelopment of selected properties.

Existing features and conditions as well as opportunities for improvement and development are highlighted in Figure 22.



### Character of the Area South of the Borman:

- A** - The Lake County Interstate Visitors Information Center provides visitor and business amenities and promotes tourism and economic development in Lake County and Indiana.
- B** - Recent hotel developments at Kennedy Avenue serve business and recreational travelers and complement other hotels/motels to the east.
- C** - New 100,000 square foot masonry distribution/warehouse buildings anchor the light industrial area.
- D** - The River Park Apartment complex contains twenty-five two-story masonry buildings with accessory surface parking but limited open space and site amenities.
- E** - Carlson Oxbow Park is a low-impact nature park that offers hiking, biking, fishing and "nature watching."